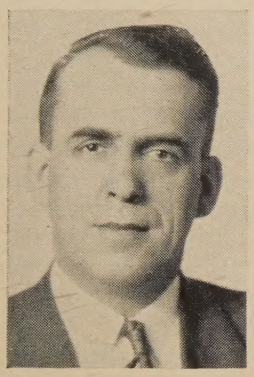
The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



Karl H. A. Rest:

CAN A PREACHER BE SAVED?

Page **2**

Hillyer H. Straton **5** The Problem of My Guilt

Robert F. Weiskotten **8** The Cross—World Conscience

Albert E. Barnett **11** The Needs of Men

Whitney M. Trousdale **14** Roads to a Vital Faith

Robert I. Kahn **16** Gossip: Minor or Major Sin?

For Other Features **31** Table of Contents

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK **20** 'CHRIST IN POETRY'

VOL. XXIII, NO. 3 MARCH, 1952

By Karl H. A. Rest

CAN A PREACHER

THERE are no traffic jams on the road "that leads to life." The heavy traffic is all on the road "that leads to destruction." The way of life is hard, says Jesus, "and those who find it are few." Even stranger than this pronouncement of Jesus is the declaration he has made of the character types who travel on this little-used road. The righteous were scandalized no end when Jesus declared to the chief priests and elders, "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you." If we take this pronouncement of Jesus and translate it into the present situation, we could formulate the problem in this sharp question: What chances does a preacher have of finding the way of salvation?

No doubt, some may be scandalized by such a question. Yet a great preacher of modern times wrote in his journal: "I marvel that any preacher should be saved." When we consider seriously the temptations peculiar to the ministry at all times and the particular dangers that assail the high calling in the present time, we, too, will probably marvel that any preacher should be saved. What are the hazards the preacher encounters which may place his salvation in jeopardy?

The Nemesis of Pride

Pride is the nemesis which dogs the footsteps of the common man and threatens his destruction; it is also the particular peril of the minister. If the minister stands at the door of the sanctuary as the people leave the service of worship, it helps him to maintain a personal contact with his people. But it also opens the door to praise. No matter how hard pressed he may be in his ministry, there are always some loyal souls who are lavish in their praise. If a minister hears his goodness extolled Sunday after Sunday, as many of them do, is it any wonder if a man here or there falls for the temptation and accepts all compliments handed him as gospel truth? Such fulsome praise is like a heady wine. Once it has been tasted, the desire for it grows stronger with the years. It may even be the cause of serious personality disturbances.

A superintendent of a home for aged pastors once told me he never knew preachers could be so petty, mean and jealous of one another as the residents of his home showed themselves to be. After he analyzed the situation, he came to the conclusion that the men missed the praises and honors they had received in their active years and therefore became garrulous; they were ready to fight for the least bit of recognition.

Others, of course, claim they are not bothered in this way; pride is not their problem. Yet the capacity of man to deceive himself is very great. He may be more vain than he thinks he is. "Imagine a conceited boy trying to discover he is conceited," says Harry Emerson Fosdick, "when his conceit makes him sure he is not conceited." So there are proud men who are not even aware of their pride. They imagine they are humble—very humble. Remember the man who admired the beautiful sunset and then admired himself for admiring the sunset; so there are men who are very much impressed with their own humility. They become proud of their humility. Then, as Samuel Taylor Coleridge has said,

> The Devil did grin,
> For his darling sin
> Is pride that apes humility.

What may have started out as a genuine feeling of humility has been gradually perverted till it has been transformed into its opposite, and pride is given free rein. "The truth is," says Bishop Gerald Kennedy, "that many a preacher rivals Hollywood when it comes to a shameless kind of exhibitionism." Such a man in a pulpit deflects all attention away from God and draws it to himself; he becomes the focal point of the service. Pride is a force strong enough to unseat a minister and throw him off the road of salvation.

The Bane of Externalism

Read in any journal about the life and work of the minister and you will encounter innumerable references to the "busy pastor." Talk to any minister, and no matter what he may be doing at the moment he is ready to drop everything to tell you how busy he is. If you want to restore the flagging morale of a minister, all you need to do in many cases is to give him a gentle pat on the back and whisper softly in his ear, "My, what a busy man you are." What's more, that compliment

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KARL H. A. REST is pastor of Emanuel Evangelical and Reformed Church, Manchester, Mich. He also serves as secretary of the Michigan-Indiana synod of his denomination and is a director of the Michigan council of churches. He has written a book of sermons for children and a volume of prayers for family and personal devotions.

A searching analysis of the sins which can beset the preacher

ALSO BE SAVED?

is no lie. Often the busiest man in the community is the minister!

Being busy, however, is not necessarily good, not even when one is busy doing good. "There is danger of being so busy even about good works," says Georgia Harkness, "that God gets pushed out." And that is not good. It is fatal. It is one of the great perils of the ministry. Arthur L. Swift sounds the warning to the minister of the present day about being "absorbed in tending ecclesiastical machinery" to the exclusion of all serious thought about God. "With no time for private devotions and a steadily diminishing taste for them," says Professor Swift, the minister "loses God in the hurry to serve him."

A Promoter

When a minister loses contact with God, his own spiritual life loses its integrity. He cannot usher others into the presence of God when he no longer is aware of God's nearness. All unconsciously the role of such a minister has been gradually changed. From the high office of an ambassador of God he has descended to being a promoter of this cause or that program. He sees his parishioners not as children of God, made in the image of God; now he is tempted to look upon them as good material, "ready made" to push this drive or that organization. Though he hates to exploit people, he is nevertheless charged with the responsibility to keep the machinery running. Himself under pressure, he hurriedly presses them into service, for there are so many wheels, and wheels within wheels, that must be kept in motion if the whole ecclesiastical plant is not to bog down.

Nor is there any letup in sight. One secretary after another sends him material from denominational headquarters which should be geared into the program of the local church. If he complains that there is too much, the executive secretary tells him he realizes just what he is up against, for he was in the pastorate himself for a few years. And with this word of sympathy, he hands him another manila envelope filled with new, up-to-the-minute materials for the local parish. In view of all the demands which are made upon his time, the pastor may experience keenly the same peril that Dr. Chalmers felt so poignantly when he said, "I am almost bustled out of my spirituality."

To circumvent a spiritual dry rot, it may well be that the minister needs to call a halt to all activity and ask himself before God: What is all this hustle and bustle about? What does it actually accomplish? He may discover in this quiet period of evaluation that in his attempt to do everything in general, he has done nothing in particular. The doom of spiritual frustration hangs over him, unless he finds ways and means whereby the inward man is renewed day by day.

Perils of Preaching

When it comes to preaching, it would appear as though we are on safe ground. Yet the sermon is not in itself a saving act, though some may be lulled into a false sense of security by thinking that it is. At the final wind-up of world history, "many will say to me on that day," says Jesus, " 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?' . . . And then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you: begone from me, you doers of wickedness.' "

Preaching may be wicked and some of it is. Under the classification of wicked preaching we must place a good deal of the idealism of the pulpit which never comes to grips with life. The preacher indulges his fancy and saunters off in a sort of daydream, describing the kind of world he sees coming—if only everyone were committed to the ideals he enunciates so piously. While the preacher is sailing his kite high up in the air, the people sit back in self-righteousness; they are quite sure that if only the rest of the world were as high-minded as they, there would not be the terrible things which we read about in our newspapers every day. The most difficult problems become amazingly simple; the people only need to take a few of the ideals the preacher has tucked away in his beautiful sermon and all these social problems will be solved, just as all physical ills are cured by a few tablespoonfuls of Hadacol.

There is a good deal of preaching which is concerned about world affairs but never gets down to the realm of personal religious living. A few years back I heard of a minister who waxed quite eloquent as he "gave his people hell for what Hitler was doing to the Jews," but somehow he never got down to cases, denouncing the sins of his own town's Main Street and back alleys. With Hitler gone, the minister of this type needs but to substitute the name of Stalin, the communists or the "respectable hoodlums" of the Kefauver investigation, to keep his people entertained. But the sermon that "entertains" the people with the sins of others, without ever bringing them to a conviction of their own sins, is truly wicked. A timid preacher on local issues may wax bold as a lion

on world issues, but in the meantime his work as a preacher is not being done. His people are not fed and he himself becomes emaciated as he follows the wrong diet.

Dull sermons are wicked sermons. Clarence Seidenspinner, one of the outstanding exponents in the current movement in liturgics, has unwittingly given the formula for producing dull sermons. In speaking of the arrangement of the order of service he mentions the "comparatively simple task of merely preparing a sermon." Sermons which are easy to prepare are hard to audit. It is easier to preach a dull sermon than it is to listen to it; as Samuel Johnson once remarked about a particularly boring book, it was easier to write it than to read it. Editors who spend a good share of their time reading sermons are not too much impressed with the quality of preaching in our day. In his autobiography, Joseph Fort Newton says of the days when he edited the annual volume of *Best Sermons*, "I read so many sermons that I almost lost my religion." If on the last day we must give an account of all the deeds done in the body, the producer of dull sermons has a heavy charge resting against him. Divine retribution may require him to read over and over again the sermon output of a lifetime. One thing is sure, these sermons will not save him.

Psychological By-Pass

Last winter I attended a church where, according to the newspaper advertisement, religion and psychology meet. Later I talked with a young woman who had recently joined that church. She was quite enthusiastic about it. Instead of talking about "sin" all the time, as they do in the old-fashioned churches, she told me, here they talk about "life." Those who a few years back clamored for a religion "in terms of this world" may find it on the spot where religion and psychology meet. Here the mourner's bench of the old evangelical churches is replaced by the couch of the psychoanalyst. In place of the older theological emphasis on sin and salvation, sacrifice and self-denial, we hear enunciated the streamlined psychological terms "frustration" and "integration," "self-expression" and "sublimation."

The highest good of the psychological school of religion is peace of mind and the means of achieving it is through a process of relaxation. An elaborate ritual has been worked out to teach people how to relax, and so worship becomes largely a matter of atmosphere, of quiet moods, of restful thoughts which banish oppressive fears and anxieties. Offhand, it would seem as if such a litany would put people to sleep. But these new apologists ask caustically: What's wrong with sleep? It is alarming when people no longer can go to sleep. At least so it is reported in the *Reader's Digest*. "We've become so keyed up and nervous that it is almost impossible to put people to sleep with a sermon," says Norman Vincent Peale. "I haven't seen anyone sleeping in church in years—and I tell you that's a bad situation."

The old call "O come, let us worship," is now reinterpreted to mean "O come, let us relax." In place of the old theological challenge, "Take up your cross," comes the new psychological comfort, "Here is a cushion for you, take it easy." In the brilliant light of this new day and age, it is discovered that the Rich Fool in the ancient parable was not altogether wrong when he said to himself, "Take thine ease." The big mistake he made was that he should have relaxed earlier in life; then he would have lasted longer.

However, if the highest good in life is to be as relaxed as a jellyfish and as contented as Walt Whitman's cows, the gospel becomes irrelevant and man loses his stature as a child of God. Losing the gospel, man also loses the salvation the gospel offers him.

The Cult of Success

The desire to get ahead is a dynamic drive in the world of affairs; it is also a powerful motive in the ministry. Much good has been accomplished through this desire to make good. However, if this dynamic drive is left unchecked, it may not only obscure the aims of the gospel message; it may even pervert the gospel beyond recognition. The followers of this perverted gospel worship not so much Jesus Christ as Horatio Alger, the modern apostle of the cult of success.

The minister affected by this spirit has one ambition only, and that is to attract a large following. Claus Harms has voiced the desire of such a pastor's heart: "One thing, O Lord, I pray for: No empty pews." And to fill the pews, there is no length to which he will not go. In his message he will strive diligently to avoid anything which may possibly disturb anyone. He will not scare people away from church by laying heavy burdens upon them. People want comfort, and when they come to his church he will see that they get it. If he does not challenge his people as some men do he at least makes them feel good. And people go for that in a big way. Just look at the crowds he is drawing Sunday after Sunday. He has found the formula for success, stated caustically by Dean Inge: "The way to be successful is to give the public exactly what it wants, and about ten per cent more of it than it expects."

But what do these large numbers have to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Recall how Christ reckoned with the possibility of only a handful remaining faithful, as he put forth the sharp question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?" Nor did he ever behold any visions of large traffic jams on the way of life as people try to squeeze through the narrow gate. Jesus did not hold up any dazzling prospects before the disciples about the popularity of their message. In fact he counseled with them, telling

(Continued on page 17)

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The Problem of My Guilt

By Hillyer H. Straton

Psalm 51.

"HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: According to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions . . ." Strange, or is it, that the 51st Psalm with its majestic cadences is the one thing that a boy of nine remembers about his whole year in the fourth grade. We had just moved to Norfolk, Virginia, and this lad was profoundly impressed by the custom of opening the daily school sessions with a reading from the Old Testament. In passing one might remark that Jewish, Catholic and Protestant children were all equally blessed—none were scandalized. The teacher not only read to us, she also gave us the privilege of memorizing some of the masterpieces of all time.

Now the penitent outpouring of an adult was not thoroughly applicable to nine-year-olds, but one grows rapidly, and through life the poignant majesty of this psalm has haunted and moved me. It is certainly the most familiar, and probably the greatest, song of penitence in all literature. From very early times it has been associated with David's sin with Bathsheba. Even if the warrior-poet did not write it, as some critics maintain, biblical compilers showed sure insight by recognizing that nothing could fit more perfectly the penitence of David. A great captain and a great sinner, he reveals his true stature far more clearly in his penitence than in the slaying of his ten thousands. The psalm deals with the problem of guilt, whether found in the palace of the king or the humblest home in the land.

'There Is None Righteous'

St. Paul makes the categorical statement, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. . . . There is not one righteous, no, not one." Those of us nurtured in the Hebrew-Christian tradition have believed it from the beginning. Yet modern man, in his insufferable pride, has rebelled against this biblical truth. But in the hour of our rebellion the greatest evils have come upon us: Dachau, Buchenwald, Hiroshima. Our conscience is rightly uneasy. Modern man has a haunting sense of guilt. We may say that dropping the atomic bomb was a military necessity, but every time it is referred to in print there is detailed explanation if not outright apology. What is the reason for this tender conscience? We have more science, more productive capacity, but with it all we know that we do not have more righteousness, and so our vaunted achievements threaten to destroy us. Take just one illustration: Education is surely desirable. It is one of the major goods of life. It should produce more happiness, more well-being, more peace of mind; but education apart from morality can be deadly indeed. Of it, the great historian Macaulay said that the social calamities which have befallen the human race are usually the result of a union of high intelligence and low desires.

In the matter of guilt, David the king shared equally with Bathsheba the commoner. To David, the temptation was the lure of the flesh; it was just another adventure. To Bethsheba, the temptation was that of association with the king, of walking with the great of the earth. They both seized their moment, but conscience was there; stifled for a time it nevertheless began its cleansing work.

The Fact of Conscience

The 51st Psalm is pregnant with the fact of conscience. It would not let the psalmist go until he had the forgiveness he knew he needed. In thinking about conscience and the guilt which is often associated with it, it can be claimed that without conscience—without a recognition of guilt and failure—man would never have become human. In the garden, God asked Adam, "Who told you that you were naked?" You see, man knew that he had failed God.

Now, animals can be taught remarkable tricks by countless and endless trial and error. In comparison, in any field of endeavor a man learns rapidly by recognizing his mistakes. He does a task wrongly only once or twice. He sees where he fails and makes a conscious effort to rectify the failure by doing it correctly. "I fail," the man says. "I am guilty of not doing it right." Because the man can look at himself objectively, he learns a thing with amazing speed as compared to the animal. This is one of the factors that make him human. A type of conscience is at the basis of this difference.

HILLYER H. STRATON became pastor of the First Baptist Church of Malden, Mass., after serving congregations in four other states. He has carried significant responsibilities for his denomination, which he represented also at the Amsterdam meeting of the World Council of Churches. He is the author of four volumes and a frequent contributor to religious journals.

Guilt is simply a mistake in the moral field. A strong case can be made that man's moral and spiritual advance is tied up intimately with the fact of guilt. If there were no guilt, there could be no moral advance. Men never would have reached the human state. So the vapid social scientist who said a generation ago that there was no such thing as sin could as intelligently have said, "There is no such thing as man." After Nathan had shown David his guilt, David was a far better man and a far greater king.

Not All Are Equally Guilty

The layman rightly wants to know what is the difference between guilt and sin. Guilt is the objective consequence of sin. In 1920 there was a presidential campaign of peculiar significance in American life, for wrapped up with the decision for the presidency was a decision as to the place the United States would take in the League of Nations. The Democratic candidate campaigned on a platform of support of the League of Nations and Woodrow Wilson's dream of the parliament of man. The Republican candidate, Warren G. Harding, was evasive on this issue. It was generally conceded that if he were elected, this would indicate a mandate from the people of the United State against entering the League of Nations.

Warren G. Harding was a Baptist. As a good Baptist, I may have voted for him, but my vote was a vote against the League of Nations as well as a vote for a Baptist candidate. The consequence of my vote, added to the others who voted in a like manner, meant that America did not enter the League of Nations. There was no international organization which could stop nazism and Japanese expansionism. World War II and its aftermath became inevitable. Consequently, a part of the guilt of the present world situation belongs to me.

It is the guilt of a ruler that his vanity may bring on the war that destroys innocent children in his own land. It is said that Adolph Hitler, at the close of World War I, was greatly moved by the suffering of German children as a result of malnutrition subsequent to that war. Some of his hatred against the Allies and his determination to wreak vengeance grew out of the suffering he witnessed. Little did he realize the far greater suffering he was pulling down upon the helpless German children of World War II. He had no personal responsibility in the first case, but a very terrible responsibility in the second.

We are all guilty in God's sight. The Bible is plain here: "There is none righteous, no, not one." Our guilt produces anguish of heart. One recalls the fellow who said he was sure the Bible was God's word because the only verse he had ever memorized he discovered by personal experience to be true: "The way of the transgressor is hard"! We are all guilty, but we are not all equally guilty. Yet, though there is inequality of guilt, there is a joint responsibility. When the Bible says, "All have sinned," it does not mean that all have sinned equally. It has been pointed out that an abandoned wife may share guilt with a faithless husband although the overt act was his alone. In one area, surely, we are all guilty, and that is in failing to do the thing we ought to have done.

There is a quality about man that says guilt must be resolved. Unless it is, the greatest difficulties ensue. Freud and his school have taught that brooding over one's sins causes personality difficulties. This is certainly true when such brooding becomes morbid. Modern psychology says that the cure involves dragging repressed complexes into the light of day and facing them frankly. When this is done, they are often seen to be of small moment. But this is just what Christianity teaches when it says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin." Modern man, in his rebellion against the recognition of his own sin, has often put the fact of it out of his own mind, but this meant that he has replaced a sense of sin with what D. M. Baillie calls "a kind of moralistic substitute." This substitute often becomes psychopathic and has contributed much to the disillusion and cynicism of our day. Man does not want to acknowledge his guilt, but he must if he is ever to have help.

Parable from Life

I once heard of a man who received an enormous water bill. He went down to the water company for an explanation. They produced the meter reading card which had been left at his home, with the reading of the various dials carefully marked by arrows. Light began to dawn. His wife, in filling out the card, had evidently read the gas meter instead of the water meter! They were paying for water on the basis of gas consumption. Not until he made a visit to the water company and discovered the mistake that had been made could the overpayment be rectified.

This is a parable that modern man should take to heart, for the morally earnest man is disturbed by his failures. If this were not so, to that extent he would not be fully man. In his deepest heart he knows he must rectify his mistakes. As we have seen, a sense of failure and the determination to rectify failure has been one of the major factors in human growth. Not to acknowledge a higher source of help that will give aid in solving our problems is to promote frustration and cynicism. As Baillie says: "Because modern man so often has no consciousness of sin against God, because he has no God, he has no saving secret for dealing with his moral failures. . . . A wholesome sense of sin which can lead to forgiveness is unconsciously repressed until it becomes a morbid complex." There must be a way of dealing with guilt if present-day man is to be freed from his complexes. The Christian has such a way.

The Source of Guilt

In thinking objectively about the matter of guilt one raises the question, What is its source? Theology has answered down the centuries, "Original sin." A generation ago there was much lightweight theological thinking which said that

the whole concept of original sin was outmoded. It was said that such a view might have been good enough for our fathers, but it had no relevancy in a day when man was running up the automatic escalator of inevitable progress leading to Utopia.

The keenest-minded contemporary thinkers, including theologians, who have been made wiser by the near-destruction which man has brought upon himself in the first half of the 20th century, have been willing to admit that the concept of original sin is not as outmoded as our immediate fathers may have thought. This point need not be labored save to say that if you believe in what the term "original sin" stands for, you have good and intelligent company. One of the greatest scholars of our generation is a historian by the name of Arnold Toynbee. He is a layman, not a clergyman. His field is secular, not church history. Yet out of his vast knowledge of human development on earth he has written:

> I have already confessed my own adherence to the traditional Christian view that there is no reason to expect any change in unredeemed human nature while human life on earth goes on. Till this earth ceases to be physically habitable by man, we may expect that the endowments of individual human beings with original sin and with natural goodness will be about the same.

One may go farther and say that the term "original sin" may be all right for a theologian, but I want to know what causes it. The answer is that pride is probably at the basis of this bent toward evil which, like it or not, men do exhibit. Pride was the downfall of Lucifer. It is the downfall of every other son of the morning. "If any man stand, let him take heed lest he fall." Reinhold Niebuhr has well said, "This is a warning which is as relevant to bishops, professors, artists, saints and holy men as to capitalists, dictators and all men of power."

'Pride Goeth before a Fall'

Pride enters into much of man's sin, even when his own sin is obscured by other factors. It is so easy to hide our injustice to the many behind our generosity to the few. It is so easy to hide our evil disposition in the bosom of our family behind our affability in public. Take for instance John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers. He has done wonders for coal miners, things that desperately needed to be done. Fifteen years ago they were among the poorest-paid of mass production workers. Today, their hazardous occupation produces larger returns for them than many other groups enjoy. To a large degree, they can thank John L. Lewis for the advance in their general well-being. Again and again Lewis made possible economic advance that had over-all social good for his miners. However, along with these social gains went an inflation of his own pride until he could even resort to insulting the President of the United States. His pride has become insufferable. It can be his downfall, as well as the downfall of thousands of innocent miners, if coal goes so high in price that it is replaced by oil.

Man, to be an integrated personality, must have release from guilt. The guilty Queen Guinevere asks:

> Shall I kill myself?
> What help in that? I cannot kill my sin.

Macbeth comes to the doctor and inquires:

> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased . . .
> And with some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff,
> Which weighs upon the heart?

Unless release from guilt comes, tragedy is inevitably the aftermath. One necessity for such release is a recognition of our guilt and of the need for forgiveness. G. K. Chesterton's famous detective, Father Brown, catches criminals by re-creating in his own mind their way of thinking. When he is asked how he, a man of God, could ever think as a criminal, he replies:

> No man is really any good until he knows how bad he is, or might be; till he has realized exactly how much right he has to all this snobbery and sneering and talking about "criminals" as if they were apes in a forest ten thousand miles away; till he's got rid of all the dirty self-deception of talking about low types and deficient skulls; till he's squeezed out of his soul the last drop of the oil of the Pharisees; till his only hope is somehow or other to have captured one criminal and kept him safe and sane under his hat.

David, in sackcloth and ashes, expressed penitence for a great sin, after the wise Nathan had shown him the depth of his iniquity. Out of deep contrition and true penitence, the psalmist almost exults in his prayer, which is an affirmation of faith in God's forgiveness: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Here is the Hebrew-Christian view: out of penitence comes forgiveness. "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

One final question: Why does God forgive? Not, as Heine said flippantly, "Because that's his line of business," but because "the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Long ago Paul wrote, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." As moderns, if we say we have no sin, we are simply using an escape mechanism and flying from reality. "But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God's Pleasure—Not Ours

The important thing is not so much the nature of what we do—unless it is inherently wrong or harmful to ourselves and others—as whether or not it is in harmony with God's laws and spirit and helps us or others to glorify God, no matter how indirectly at times. If it does not do that, or if it keeps us from doing it, then it is something we should not indulge in no matter how much we think we would enjoy it. You see, not even our leisure time ought to be an excuse to do whatever we please, unless what we please is also pleasing to God.—*Leon D. Sanborn, Union Church, Berea, Ky.*

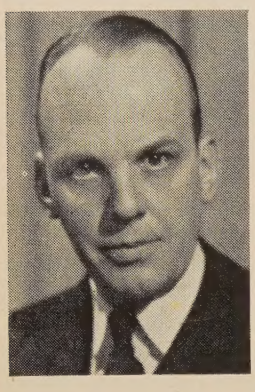
ROBERT F. WEISKOTTEN is a graduate of Wittenberg College and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt. Airy, Philadelphia. He serves as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Richmond Hill, N. Y., and is the director of the Church Peace Mission with headquarters in New York. In 1949 he was an exchange preacher to England.

The Cross—Conscience for the World

By Robert F. Weiskotten

. . . our message is Christ crucified—a stumbling-block to the Jews, sheer folly to the Gentiles . . . I Corinthains 1:23.

WHEREIN lies the strange power and persistence of the cross? Is it not first of all in the fact that it is the cross which has made it impossible for the world to forget the Christ? It was Emerson who said that "Jesus is not so much written on human history as plowed into it"—and the cross is the plowshare. His life, like a box of ointment broken in a room, was broken against a hard and unforgiving world, and may even yet fill the world with its fragrance. Jesus himself was sure that his broken life would be the power which would at last break through the hard crust of man's pride and stupidity and touch his conscience. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."



This is the very truth which John Masefield caught in his drama of the passion, *The Trial of Jesus*. In it he makes the wife of Pontius Pilate ask this question of the Roman centurion who was in charge of the crucifixion: "What do you think of his claim?" The soldier replies, "If a man believes anything up to the point of dying on a cross for it he will find others to believe it." She continues: "Do you think he is dead?" The answer comes back, "No, lady, I don't." "Where is he, then?" she cries. And the soldier replies, "Let loose in the world, lady, let loose in the world where neither Roman nor Jew can stop his truth!"

That's it, you see! On Calvary God spoke a truth he had been trying to make clear to men for a long time. And now that this truth has been sealed with his own blood it can never be erased from the conscience of mankind.

The Mind of Christ

And the church, if it is to survive these chaotic times, must have the courage to express the Christian conscience for the world. For the church is the body of Christ in the world today, with the mind of Christ at the center of its life and the spirit of Christ as the method of its life. And no one can honestly read the record of Christ's mind and spirit without knowing exactly where he would be standing in the midst of these threatening times: for the spirit of reconciliation always as over against the method and spirit of war; for the acceptance of mutual responsibility in the building of a world community as over against our present suicidal nationalisms; for the recognition of our God-sired kinship with all peoples as over against the rising tide of racial and class hatreds; for a society builded upon the motive of service and justice for the many as over against the motive of private advantage for the few. You see, if we are morally honest with this faith of ours there is no mistaking the place where Chirst would be standing—and the church belongs to Christ.

Facing Society

Ah, but that's what makes it so difficult to be Christian. The times are not always propitious. They never were. There is nothing which so disturbs men of sensitive conscience today and produces such agony of spirit, as the thought that it seems a hopeless business to remain faithful to the way of Christ in the midst of a world that is organized so largely along unchristian lines. And the two-way danger of such thinking is that we either give way to a completely cynical mood or else try to avoid the hard challenge of the gospel by escaping into a world of liturgical reverie. And either way, nothing comes of it. It was in this mood of both cynicism and escape that Robinson Jeffers wrote as the gathering clouds presaged the long dark night of World War II. Addressing his word to his two young sons, he advises them to renounce society and seek the isolation of the mountains, where they may know personal safety a while longer and find some satisfaction at least in a healthy physical existence close to nature:

> And boys, be in nothing so moderate as in love of man,
> A clever servant, insufferable master.
> There's the trap which catches noblest spirits,
> That caught, they say, God, when He walked on earth.*

Well, it is in such a mood that many a man lives today, and it is in such a world that the Christian church must preach her gospel. And the business of the church in such a world is far, far more than simply the building of an externally strong institution; it is rather to see clearly and point courageously to that truth which is vitally Christian, until that truth takes hold upon the con-

*From *Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*. Random House, 1937. Used by permission.

science of our communities, our nation, our council of nations, giving shape to all their structures and character to all their relationships.

Take a quick look at just one area of life today where the mind and method of Christ are trying to lay hold upon us all. There is nothing more frightening at this moment than the rising tide of almost hysterical faith in military might alone as the only safeguard for keeping the peace. Some time back, several of us engaged in public debate with a well known foreign correspondent and a member of the national Congress. The subject was, "Is America Overmilitarized?" As though almost eighty cents out of every budget dollar for past and future wars is not answer enough to the question! The whole burden of their argument was that there is but *one* way to safeguard the democratic nations, and that is by building a military establishment so superior and so imposing that no enemy of democracy will ever dare again to take up arms against us. Finally the gentleman from Washington summed it up in this blunt fashion: "If we are to keep our country safe we must spend more and more in building up our military strength and less and less on the relief and reconstruction of other nations. We don't have to feed them. We may have to fight them."

Military Mind-Set

Now what are we going to do when we come up against a mind-set like that? What are we going to do with the spirit of him who said, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword?" Certainly it would seem that we should see into the realism of Christ's mind and spirit by now. The belief that nothing short of military might can win any victory for a freedom-loving nation against a totalitarian state is wholly lacking in any realistic understanding of their differences. On the contrary, it is the chaos and the devastation resulting from war which will be the very soil in which the enemies of freedom may at last win their victory. Communism, for instance, is the last resort of the desperate and desolated peoples of the earth. It always seeks out the infected area, where poverty and injustice and hopelessness reside, and there it can settle and ferment. The best possible defense against communism or any other ism would be to divert the mounting billions we are spending on militarizing the nations into channels of reconstruction and human need, and by so doing undercut communism at the very place where it makes its greatest appeal. From a purely political point of view it is shortsighted, if not stupid, to go on basing diplomatic policy predominantly upon military might. In a world living under the imminent threat of hydrogen warfare there is no such thing as military supremacy. Nothing less than a national policy of active good will, with our human and material resources fully mobilized for peace, and in the resolute faith that America still has the moral as well as the material capacity for greatness, will meet the challenge of our time.

You see, whether we like it or not, the Christian church is challenged at the very core of its conscience by this issue today. And whatever may be our private feelings and reasoning in the matter, we are under solemn obligation, as representatives of the church, to glorify the unmistakable mind and method of Christ.

Christian Challenge

There was nothing more heartening to some of us who attended the first meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam than the forthright statement with which that great body prefaced its study on the church and war. There they were, Protestant Christians from almost every country across the world, of many hues and colors and shades of race and class and national origin and Christian tradition, but uniting in one voice:

> . . . in proclaiming to all mankind that war is contrary to the will of God. War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our present international life is a sin against God and a degradation . . . The churches for their part have the duty of declaring those moral principles which obedience to God requires in war as in peace. They must not allow their moral and spiritual resources to be used by the state in war or in peace as a means of propagating an ideology or supporting a cause in which they cannot wholeheartedly concur.

Indeed, there were many at Amsterdam who admitted in all humility and penitence that as individuals they might not be equal to standing upon such high ground, but there was no dissent from the above statement as expressing the will of God in the matter—that, as a church which is the body of Christ, it is here we must stand as the conscience for the world.

A Mighty Force

A wise teacher of our time has pointed out the truth that, whenever the church has been too careful of its institutional life and too cautious about challenging the conscience of the world with its gospel, it has been a cheap and contemptible thing; but that, whenever it has been true to Christ and bold with the spirit of his boldness, then it has been a mighty force in the world.

Two quick pictures of the church in our own time will attest the truth of this judgment. First the church in Spain—handmaiden of intrenched privilege, prostituting its spiritual authority for institutional safety and power; that church, despite the many weak apologies that have been made for it in some quarters, is in the eyes of all honest men a cheap and contemptible thing. Now, beside that picture place another—the Church of Denmark under its martyr-leader Kaj Munk, standing boldly against political tyranny and military might, and with the same calm courage of its Reformation forebears declaring, "We must obey God rather than men." Always it is so, you see, that when the church holds up the mind and the method of Christ as the conscience for the world,

then the dream of God's Kingdom comes on apace; but failing that, the church becomes a cheap and contemptible thing.

Moral Relativism

And it is right at this point that the church faces its most dangerous temptation. Especially under the stress of international conflict, with its tremendous pull of patriotic loyalty, it is so easy to transfer allegiance from the spiritual Head of the church to some lesser ruler. In so doing the church is guilty of degrading its own spiritual authority and of renouncing its peculiar prophetic function in the building of a better world. The apostasy of the church has too often been its unwillingness to accept the mind and the method of Christ as being either adequate or practical for meeting the social and political crises of the times. And so, while paying lip service to the will of God as revealed in Christ, we are in danger of lapsing into moral relativism under the pressure of the immediate situation, pleading the "irrelevance of the ideal" and the "impossible" demand of the Christian gospel. Let God do it his way if he will, but as for us, we are not going to be caught in the trap of any such idealism! All such ways of thinking, and they are many today, must at last empty the gospel of its essential meaning and render it socially valueless. The church, if it is to justify its unique and saving mission in the world, must remember that, as one of our own best prophets has put it, "men are waiting to have the church tell them in Christ's name whether making atomic war is right or wrong." As a church we dare never forget that we are speaking in His name.

Here, then, is the realism of the Christian church—its prophetic function is to stand in the midst of a sick and disordered world and point the way by word and deed which alone can free man from the folly of his own devices and bring him and his world into conformity with the will of God. The wisdom of God has too long seemed foolishness to men. Man must sometime learn (let us pray that it is not too late) that the "foolishness of the cross" is just about the only wisdom left to him.

Surely it was against the background of a Cross that Lucia Trent wrote:

> Earth is a lonely place for one
> Whose luminous dreaming has just begun;
> But lonelier far for those who know
> The empty way that dreamers go.
> Those who have felt the whip and sting
> Of weary-footed venturing,
> And who have run their hands that dare
> Into treacherous spears raised everywhere
> By masters arrogant and smug,
> Who govern men with gun and thug. . . .
> Keep to your dreams, intrepid few,
> The world has bitter need of you.

Titles and Texts

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Leslie Conrad, Jr., Exec. Sec'y, Luther League of America. "Making Marriage Successful." Eph. 5:21-22, 25 (R.S.V.)—*Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. . . . Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

Andrew P. Burton, First Baptist, Rensselaer, N. Y. "Help in a Hindering World." Luke 24:36—*Jesus himself stood in the midst of them.*

Murray C. Johnson, First Friends, Marion, Ind. "Acid Mouth." Jer. 31:30; Jas. 3:8—*Every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge. . . . But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

Rex Stowers Clements, Bryn Mawr Presbyterian, Bryn Mawr, Pa. "Tomorrow Begins Today." Heb. 11:16—*But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.*

Sherrill B. Biggers, Kilgo Methodist, Charlotte, N. C. "The Snob Who Wouldn't Accept Others" (Jonah). Jonah 4:5—*So Jonah went out of the city and made him a tent and sat under it.*

Fred R. Harrison, First Methodist, Texarkana, Ark. "The Battle We Forget." II Sam. 18:8— . . . *and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.*

Clifford O. Simpson, Center Congregational, Manchester, Conn. "The God of Victory." I Cor. 15:57—*Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Norman D. Newman, College Methodist, Cedarville, Ohio "Forgiveness Is Not Easy." Mark 2:9—*Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?*

Graham R. Hodges, First Congregational, Ticonderoga, N. Y. "Have You Retired from Life?" II Sam. 17:23—*When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his ass and started home . . . then, after leaving directions about his family, he strangled himself.*

L. W. Hauter, First Presbyterian, Oelwein, Iowa. "My 38th Parallel." Rom. 7:19—*The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

Religion and the Needs of Men

By Albert E. Barnett

Man shall not live by bread alone. Matthew 4:4.
Thou hast the words of eternal life. John 6:68.

SOME years ago archaeologists found inscribed on the tomb of the child of an ancient king this lament: "My life, my love, my little one; would God I had died for thee." Status, power, wealth, the externals of royalty, had lost their glamor. The love of a father's heart remained as the only reality.

In 1892 a strike occurred in the Carnegie steel mills at Homestead, Pennsylvania. State militia and Pinkerton detectives killed ten men and broke the strike. A brilliant young lawyer was profoundly stirred at the spectacle of organized capital employing a private army to slaughter organized labor for daring to resist an arbitrary wage cut. Louis D. Brandeis, later a justice of the United States Supreme Court, then recently married, asked his bride if she were willing to live simply in order that he might enjoy the luxury of devoting his time and talent to securing justice for American workingmen. Small wonder that a man who chose such devotion as his "luxury" came to be called "the greatest Jew since Jesus."

In a city where I once lived, there occurred a strike in the composing room of a certain publisher. Opportunity was given me on two occasions to talk with the publisher and in one of these instances he said of a printer: "Bob Blank is just a fool. On the piecework basis which I am determined to introduce and against which this strike is called, he can make $9 every day, and he has walked out to win the privilege of making $6 a day!" When this characterization was repeated to my friend Bob, he replied: "Yes, because I am blessed with steady nerves I can make $9 a day on piecework. But if I make $9 a day on that basis it will mean that another man whose wife and children need the same food, clothing and educational opportunity as mine will make only $3. I had rather make $6 a day and let him make $6. With both of us doing our best our employer will not suffer and all of us will live more like human beings." For this workingman the kind of brotherhood encouraged in the early days of the Christian church meant more than 50 per cent wage increase.

A nineteen-year-old boy had been killed in a drunken brawl on the porch of a three-room hotel near the little church I served. Three family groups, totaling twelve persons, made those three rooms their home. Poverty and squalor fixed the environment of the mothers and their children. No beauty was there save such as was latent in those people's hearts. My wife and I, not knowing of the tragedy, dropped in next day to take two little dresses, pink and blue. Never have I seen such appreciation of color and cleanness as those little girls manifested. At the funeral four days later, delayed until money could be raised to defray expenses, there was one bunch of flowers tied with pink tulle. When the grave had been filled, the mother took this piece of tulle to keep with the few treasures she could call her own. Here was hunger for beauty that grasped at the simplest satisfactions.

Common Testimony

These incidents bear the common testimony that men have needs not satisfied by necessities bought at the grocery store, that men do not "live by bread alone," that "words of life" exist to which men listen eagerly and to which they make impressive response.

The realities around which life centers, the "words of eternal life" that stir the human heart to its depths, are chiefly four: love, beauty, freedom, faith. By these men live and for the sake of them they gladly die.

Love and appreciation are elemental necessities. Men hunger for them as acutely as they hunger for the satisfaction of physical appetites. In response to them the distinctly personal qualities of life are called into play. Tragedy occurs whenever, as in war or interracial strife, lives are brought into intimate relations with love absent or subordinated. No substitutes for love exist. Love creates the spiritual reality called home, whether housed in a mansion or a shack. Sooner or later men must discover what Jesus saw so clearly, that love is the only valid foundation for a stable society and a peaceful world.

Beauty is essential if life is to be richly lived. The majesty of mountains, the color of sunsets, the quiet power of a mighty river minister to man's spirit. They typify the nearness of some-

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ALBERT E. BARNETT became professor of New Testament at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in 1950 after serving six years on the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill. He is the author of five volumes including The Epistles of Jude and Second Peter *which will appear in the "Interpreter's Bible" series.*

thing ultimate. Architecture that combines beauty with utility performs a thoroughly spiritual function. The multitudes that throng great art galleries testify to the importance of beauty for life.

Men desire to live their lives spontaneously and under self-direction. Creative participation in the work they do and the privelege of having something to say about the conditions under which they labor are implicit in the deep-running quest for freedom. Denial of freedom explains much of the unrest of our times around the world and offers communism an undeserved opportunity for its deceptive propaganda. To the shame of the church, fear of communism is gaining concessions for the disadvantaged which a Christian conscience ought long ago to have guaranteed. The urge to freedom is from God. Truth, justice, the achievement of equality depend upon it. It requires recognition, not suppression.

The Quest for God

Man's deepest yearning is for God. His deepest satisfaction is in finding God. In 1927 Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin delivered the Cole lectures at Vanderbilt University. His theme was "Expanding Horizons." His fifth lecture was on "A Divine Consciousness." In it he told the story of the last moments of Sylvester Horne, who had come to America to deliver the Beecher lectures at Yale University. Standing with his wife on the deck of the ship, together enjoying a magnificent sunset, Horne said: "A scene like that awakens in me a mood of longing like homesickness; not for our dear home across the waters, but for that home that lies beyond the seas of time, our final and eternal home of the spirit." Almost at the moment he was stricken and his spirit went home to Him who gave it. This glimpse into the heart of a great Christian is a glimpse into the heart of humanity. Man's history can be written in terms of his quest for God. His most significant journeys have been made not across desert or sea, but out of the material into the spiritual, from the visible and tangible into the realm of the eternal.

Precisely because man's truest life consists in these areas, religion must concern itself with other aspects of man's experience. The struggle to live the higher life is parralleled by the alluring appeals of the sensory and the material. Religion must effect an adjustment of the two urges. The adjustment must avoid the extremes of proposing to live without bread or else to live "by bread alone." Jesus points the way. He repudiated asceticism. He recognized the legitimacy of man's material wants. He was concerned with the physical needs of men and with the society created by the effort to meet those needs, but his insistence was that both are relevant to other aspects of man's existence.

Stanley Jones has said as profound a word on this matter as I have heard. Asked how much money a missionary needs, he replied, "Just enough to be able to forget it!" Exactly that much, no more and no less, every man needs. A Christian society will see that every person has that much, and will make it increasingly difficult for any person to have more. Nobody needs to give assent to the fallacies of communism or its little pink brother, socialism, to commit himself to that truth. Insecurity and luxury both create material-mindedness. Both must somehow give way in the interest of a way of life exemplified by Jesus and commended to men as God's will for them. The New Testament, not any Marxian manifesto, supplies the warrant for this position.

Christianity and the Social Order

This is by no means to equate Christianity with any existing or conceivable economic or social system. Nor does it suggest that the meaning of Christianity is exhausted in reform. The Christian faith would have its place if all problems were solved. Nevertheless, Christianity never has been, and in the nature of the case cannot be, discussed in purely theoretical terms. It is a religious faith, not primarily a philosophy. It takes account of the plight of men and proposes the redemption of man and man's world. In a world of hunger, it concerns itself with bread. In a world of vast inequality, it proclaims God's impartial love for the last, the least, the lost man, and it undertakes in its gospel of a coming Kingdom to encourage the establishment of a society on earth in which the equal worth of persons will be appreciated. Men live their lives morally and spiritually in a society largely created by the ways in which men supply their physical necessities. This society in turn colors and conditions moral insight and capacities. It follows that in the interest of the moral and spiritual well-being of people, Christianity insists on the Christianization of society and the democratization of the economic system, whose only reason for existence is the supplying of the physical necessities of persons.

Primary Objective

A great southern editor and a great Christian, writing in commendation of the recent legalization extending the Social Security act to include domestic servants and farm labor, said: "Already I can see the mean and greedy growing red in the face about it and denouncing it as socialism, or worse, but the fact is, the finest piece of legislation to be enacted in the field of social needs is now, very belatedly, a law." That editor—Ralph McGill, of the *Atlanta Constitution*—is by no stretch of the imagination a Communist or Socialist, but through Christian eyes he sees that an economic system has as a primary objective the creation of security and reasonable comfort for people in matters of clothing, food and shelter. Of course things Jesus himself said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need" of them. Advocates of democracy, like Mr. McGill, wisely refute communism by laying it upon the conscience of Christians to see justice done.

A glance at the map of the world shows what the real bulwark against communism is. Lands in which Greek and Roman Catholicism have interpreted religion in terms of dogma and liturgy

are lands whose people have espoused atheistic remedies. Stalin and several of his closest associates were originally trained for the Greek Catholic priesthood, but despaired of the possibility of service to human welfare through the church. Lands in which socially minded Protestantism has made Jesus' teaching about the worth of persons a primary emphasis have resisted and will continue to resist materialistic isms of all sorts.

Functioning Christianity

If Christianity is to function in the world as it stands and thereby make itself intelligible where men are living their lives, it must dedicate itself to some such propositions as these:

1. The church must never identify itself with the status quo or align itself with opponents of change as such. In a world where the only constant factor is change itself, the function of religion must be to guide and encourage change, not resist it. Obstructionism merely guarantees that change will come through chaos and tragic loss.

2. The church must insistently assert the worth of persons. The material resources of the universe are to be exploited in the interest of persons. Material things achieve value because of their relation to the welfare of persons. When they are otherwise regarded, social confusion and revolution threaten. When men prate of the sanctity of property rights and brand as communistic every voice that asserts the primacy of human values, the Christian pulpit must proclaim with unmistakable clarity and uncompromising vigor that life itself is alone sacred.

3. The church must develop and manifest a genuine trust of democracy. The distinctive principle of Protestantism, as contrasted with Romanism, is its espousal of the democratic as against the aristocratic principle. It remains for Protestantism to push this faith in democracy to its logical outcomes in all directions. Results in particular instances may turn out to be different from advance expectations and preferences, but this should cause no fear. The soundness of the democratic principle guarantees ultimate outcomes, and men of faith will fix their eyes on the far horizons of life.

4. The church must interpret religion as a resource, not merely as a refuge. It must demonstrate that faith supplies energy and courage for daring achievement and sacrificial service. It must lure men to adventure and experimentation, instead of enervating them with fear and calculating complacency.

Two Pastoral Prayers

By Herbert Beecher Hudnut

Minister, Woodward Avenue Presbyterian, Detroit, Michigan

Palm Sunday

GOD commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Know ye not that all we who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? He suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, our gracious Heavenly Father, in quietness and in confidence help us to find our strength. Increase in us today the spirit of true devotion as we remember that our Lord set his face as a flint to go to Jerusalem—that he allowed nothing to turn him aside from this chosen imperative, even though the shadow of a cross fell athwart his path. And so, from his divine example, may we learn steadfastness of purpose, courage for suffering, and a holy calm when the storms of life beat upon us to overwhelm us. For thou, Lord, art our Rock and our Fortress, our ever sure defense, and thou wilt be with us, e'en though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Easter

THIS is the day which the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

Let us pray:

We thank thee, gracious Father, God of our Life and Lord of our salvation, that thou hast brought us to the dawn of this holy day. Heaven and earth are met together. The heavens declare the glory of God and earth resounds with praise. Truly, "the hush of our hearts is as holy, as hovers where angels have flown." We bow in adoration as the message of Easter comes to us again with the faint flush and freshness of the dawn. Our hearts respond to the age-old song: "Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! Alleluia!" And somehow, a strange peace seems to descend upon our lives—a presage of that day which shall surely come, when the war-drum throbs to silence and peace, when love and immortality shall be brought to light. In the name of Christ the Savior. Amen.

A Christian minister needs a heart of gold, a backbone of steel, and plenty of iron in his blood. —*Graham R. Hodges, First Congregational, Ticonderago, N.Y.*

Four Roads to a Vital Faith

By Whitney M. Trousdale

. . . and the life I now live, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20.

THE great roads or streets of the world have a peculiar fascination for most people. Who of us has not heard of the Champs-Elysées in Paris, or Unter den Linden in Berlin, or High Street, Oxford, or New York's Fifth Avenue? Whether you or I ever actually see the famous highways of the world matters little. But whether we traverse the four roads spoken of in the New Testament matters tremendously. You see, it is by traveling the four great biblical roads that we come to a vital Christian faith.

I. The Damascus Road

The Damascus road is the road of spiritual awakening (Acts 9). Here is the story in Paul's own words of his experience of Christ. It was the turning point in his life; from that time forward Paul ceased to be the archpersecutor of the Christian church and became its outstanding missionary of all time.

Every man must, if his religious life is really to be fruitful, tread the Damascus road. A spiritual awakening is indispensably necessary. What else did Christ mean when he said, "Ye must be born again"? Now this matter of conversion, of a changed life, of a spiritual rebirth, is sometimes a stumbling block. It shouldn't be, if we understand it aright.

Let us consider what is the basic meaning of conversion. The Greek word is *metanoia,* which means "change of mind." And a truly changed mind brings about a changed spirit, and a changed spirit brings about a changed life. Whether the change be sudden or gradual, whether it be quiet or emotional, is relatively inconsequential. The main thing is that life is changed at the very center.

Changed into what? Lives which were characteristically self-conscious become increasingly God-conscious. Lives which were purposeless become purposeful. Lives which were self-centered become lives which are Christ-centered, in which we seek always to do his will. But how, you ask, is this sense of God's love to be established? By lifting up Christ. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me."

Now this lifting up of Christ before men does two definite things. First, in the light of his presence we become acutely conscious of our own sin and unworthiness. Our boasted self-righteousness falls as we note the contrast between what he is and what we are. We feel as Isaiah felt when he caught a vision in the temple of the holiness of God. And then, we may not be as conscious of our sins as we are of a sense of unfulfillment and incompleteness. We may have lived a life in which we did not wander too deeply into the far country. We have simply been living on the outskirts of the City of God. There are many such good people. Their lives lack the joy and spontaneity of a Christ-filled life.

In either of these two ways, the vision comes —in a sense of sin or in a sense of incompletion; but in either case we need Christ.

The Damascus road experience, if not in its exact form, at least in its fruitage, is our common need. We need—and we know it—to be spiritually awakened. We want the sense of having found God and of his having found us.

II. The Jericho Road

The Jericho road is the road of service to man (Luke 10). The biblical story of the Good Samaritan on the Jericho road is too well known to need repeating here. Of those three men—priest, Levite and Samaritan—it is apparent that the first two, in spite of their religious affiliations, had never actually traveled the Damascus road. If they had they could not so easily have passed by on the other side. They were religious men only in name. Their works belied the reality of their profession. When men are truly conscious of God they become deeply sensitive to human need.

On the other hand, look at the Samaritan. His sympathy and helpfulness, his willingness to befriend a fellow traveler in difficulty, unmistakably revealed the state of his inner life.

You see, the Jericho road inevitably leads off the Damascus road. You cannot traverse the first without being led into the second. Human service must follow mystic fellowship, or our mysticism degenerates into sentimentality or impractical otherwordliness. No Christian can really be a Christian, no religious man can truly be religious,

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WHITNEY M. TROUSDALE has been the minister of Summit Presbyterian Church, Germantown, Pa., since 1948. A graduate of Cornell University and Drew Theological Seminary, he has pursued postgraduate studies abroad. His earlier ministry was spent as a student counselor at Syracuse University and in two pastorates in New York.

who is indifferent and callous to suffering, poverty, must be moral and it must be practical.

There is an angle to this story of the Jericho road which is not always too apparent. We must never think that we are fully and completely Christian when we have done a deed of mercy and of kindness. The work of salvaging the injured, the sick, the destitute is a truly Christion work. But the prevention of crime, of theft, of evildoing is also the Christian's responsibility.

The modern Good Samaritan not only will take the injured traveler to the inn and take care of him, but he will also be interested in freeing the Jericho road from bandits and making it safe for all, in preventing crimes as well as mitigating the harmful effects of evils committed.

How the Jericho roads of today are to be freed from the bandits, the robbers and our modern gangsters is a problem that takes the best minds of educators, the legal profession, government and all who have the welfare of society at heart. Let no man think because he is secularly engaged that he can do nothing to bring about the Kingdom of God. Any contribution that anyone can make toward the building of a more just social order must rank high in God's sight.

Here then is our Jericho road to tread. The road of service, not alone to the individual but to society as well, that the road may be made safe. It is a road of perils and opportunities.

III. The Via Dolorosa

The Via Dolorosa is the road of sorrow and pain (Matthew 18). Just as Christ had to tread that dreary way from the Praetorium to Golgotha with a heavy cross on his back, so also we are forced in life, sooner or later, to carry our cross.

This road which the Christian must traverse in his religious pilgrimage differs appreciably from the previous roads. There is joy about walking the Damascus road and zest in traversing the Jericho road. It is a thrilling experience to sense God's presence vividly for the first time. It is an enheartening experience to walk the Jericho road and find oneself actually being a friend to man. There are solid and substantial satisfactions in both these experiences.

The Via Dolorosa is a different kind of road. It is a road which most of us never choose to travel, but a road which inevitably lies ahead. And because it is inevitable God must have a purpose in it.

I say the Via Dolorosa is inevitable, because in a world such as ours sorrow, sickness, trouble and death sooner or later come. But such experiences are not without compensation. As Aristotle said years ago, sorrow may have "a purifying, ennobling and chastening effect upon the soul."

Years ago, in a former parish, I called one day on a dear old lady nearly ninety who had recently laid to rest her only daughter, with whom she lived. Now all of the family were gone. She faced life alone save for a few church friends and neighbors. As we sat and talked, she told me how much the senior pastor of the church had meant to her at the time of her loss. "You see," she said, "he has been a great sufferer and has had a great sorrow. And out of his understanding he comforts me."

There is another way in which we may be forced into traveling the Via Dolorosa. Sometimes in doing that which is good and just we find ourselves lined up against vested and entrenched evil. Then we are confronted by Christ's cross. Will we bear it, or will we compromise with evil in order to save ourselves from pain or trouble or death?

Yes, there is inevitability about the Via Dolorosa. If we live adventurous Christian lives, seeking to leave the world better than we found it, we may get in trouble. If we live our lives unadventurously we'll also have difficulties. But in either case, through the path of sorrow and pain the inner man may grow. The Via Dolorosa may be a steep and cobblestoned road in comparison with the the Damascus and Jericho roads. But looking back upon the hard experiences, how often we can see the hand of God.

IV. The Emmaus Road

Our fourth road is the Emmaus road, the road illumined by the divine presence. (Luke 24). It was evening of that first Easter day as two followers of Christ journeyed from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Gradually they became conscious of a Presence in their midst; indeed they said, "Did not our very hearts burn within us?" The sense of Christ's abiding presence had come to them in all its quickening and transforming power.

This broad, glorious Emmaus road is the loveliest road of them all. It is the last and it is the best. It is the reward of those who have faithfully trod the other three, particularly those who have walked the Via Dolorosa uncomplainingly and without bitterness.

When in the midst of the difficulties of life we have learned to say, "Not my will, but thine be done," when we have learned to trust Christ completely, when our deepest desire is to know and serve him, then our hearts too will burn within us and the light of his presence will be shed abroad in our hearts. This is the spirit-filled life of which God's saints have so beautifully spoken and which they have even more gloriously lived.

And now I would add one further thought. We have here not four roads, any one of which will lead us to the City of God, but rather four lanes in one great highway. At various times in our life, we will be following each particular lane. But of one thing we must be careful—that we do not overlook the Damascus road. If we find that road and keep going we shall almost inevitably come into the others. If we miss our starting point, an experience of God in our hearts, we may never really be able to follow either with joy or satisfaction the other roads to a vital religious faith.

Damascus road, Jericho road, Via Dolorosa, Emmaus road—these are the inevitable roads of religious experience. May we find increasing joy in assiduously treading each of them into whatever road God may lead us tomorrow.

Gossip: Minor Sin or Major Vice?

By Robert I. Kahn

Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer in the land. Leviticus 19:16.

ONCE upon a time, according to a talmudic legend, a king gave his jester the command, "Go out and buy the very best thing in the world." In a short time the jester was back with a package. He unwrapped it before the king and held up to his gaze a tongue.

"Now that was wisely chosen," said the king. "Truly the tongue is the best thing in the world. Now, buy me the worst thing in the world." The jester took a little longer this time, but finally returned to the king with another package. He unwrapped it and behold, a tongue!

Surely no story could more aptly illustrate the fact that the gift of speech is both man's glory and his downfall, that the human tongue is a great gift and a great danger.

This gift of communication that we have—the God-given ability to speak words of faith, to give solace in sorrow, to express ideals—is at the same time used to speak of filth and to tell lies. The same lips that can sing a hymn or recite a creed are perverted and misused. Probably the most widespread abuse of that gift of speech is in the universal habit of talebearing and gossip.

We Love to Gossip

Oh, how we love to gossip. We like the tittle-tattle, the chit-chat, the "don't breathe a word of this" and "I'm telling you strictly in confidence." Our eyes shine, we chew over every juicy morsel, and our ears wag in the wind. A very widespread habit.

Yes, we love it. And what a pity it is and a waste of high powers that the gift of language which can spell out the highest meaning in life should be put to such petty use, that ears which can thrill to the music of Beethoven could descend to listening to the prattle of talebearers.

But it is not merely a waste and not merely a pity. Actually, talebearing is an evil, a vice, a sin. We've been somewhat misled by the morality of our times. Our nation is fairly well dominated by the Christian point of view, in which talebearing does not loom very large. The seven cardinal sins of the Roman Catholic Church do not include it. As a matter of fact, in America gossip has become a well paid profession. If you are clever enough and long-tongued enough you can even be syndicated. Have you read through the *Reader's Digest*? The cleverest gossip, the worst talebearing, if it's clever enough, manages to get into print. We have been misled by this current morality. We have forgotten what we ought to have remembered, that in Jewish religion talebearing stands very high on the "Hit Parade" of sins.

Idolatry, adultery, murder are the three cardinal sins, but number four is the sin of gossip, and Judaism defines it very accurately as the spreading of any sort of rumor or report that would defame or mar the reputation of another human being. "It makes no difference," says the Talmud, "whether that report is true or false." You can't hide behind the statement, "I wasn't gossiping—I was simply reporting what I knew to be true." As a matter of fact the insinuation, "Oh, what I could tell you about that man if I were allowed to speak," is regarded as the most vicious type of talebearing.

Talebearing Boomerangs

Talebearing hurts not only the person about whom the gossip is spread; it damages likewise the person who gossips *and* the person who listens. A person who carries tales frequently tells you more about himself than about the other party. When a woman says of someone who has more dresses than she, "Don't you think she's a trifle overdressed?" she is really saying, "I am envious." And if a man says of someone who has more cars than he, "He's extravagant," he is saying of himself, "I am jealous." And when we come to twisting other people's motives because we can't criticize their actions, then we show ourselves in a truly pitiless white light.

I recall that, something like twenty or twenty-two years ago in Cincinnati, the town's notoriously stingy character said of a business associate who had been very generous, "Ah, that man just wants the limelight and this is his way of buying it." It may have been true, although I doubt it. But what was true beyond a doubt was that this man who was speaking had no knowledge of what it means to have a generous heart—no knowledge at all. He could not conceive a person's giving for giving's sake. He gossiped about himself.

Gossip hurts us and tells the tale of our inner motivations. But it hurts the person who listens as well. It breeds poisonous distrust and suspicion, and we who listen have many things spoiled for

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ROBERT I. KAHN became the rabbi of Temple Emanu El of Houston, Tex., following his ordination in 1935 at Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, which also honored him with the degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters in 1950. An active leader in civic and fraternal organizations, he is in wide demand as a public speaker. He has served on the executive committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

us. How many of us have heard something that a friend of ours is supposed to have said about us? Before we could get it straightened out by direct contact, we lost a friend. I recall vividly an army incident. There were two chaplains in an army base hospital, to one of whom I said about the other that he had been unusually cooperative, a fine person. And this man's answer was, "He feels that you have the ear of some of the higher-ups and he's bucking for a promotion." I resented it, I couldn't believe it; and yet somehow the worm of suspicion had been placed in my mind and I always wondered, was it perhaps true? It spoiled my friendship because I had listened.

Irreparable Damage

But the worst thing of all about talebearing is that it cannot be repaired. Once the word has left our mouth it cannot be recalled. You can throw garbage on a man's lawn and you can clean it up again, but once you throw garbage on his name there is no removing it. You can break something of his—a chair, a table, his jaw; the jaw can be healed, the table can be replaced, but break his good name and you can never put it back together again. It's no wonder that the Talmud says that "the tongue is worse than the sword," because a sword can wound only from near by, but a tongue can wound from afar. And one rabbi went so far as to say that the one sin that God would not forgive, even though a person repents, was the sin of talebearing. There can be no repentance because there can be no repair of the damage.

Well, of course all this is negative, isn't it? I am in somewhat the position of the Yeshivah (seminary) student who came back to his Yeshivah after a week end of practice preaching for a community. He said to his teacher: "I'm very discouraged. I don't think preaching is at all effective. In my little community I noticed that all they do is talk about each other, backbite, gossip. Last Sabbath I preached for two hours on the sin of talebearing, and Saturday night they were back at it again." His teacher looked at him and asked, "Did they hear you?" "Oh yes." "Did they pay attention?" "Oh yes." "Well," he said, "you *can* take credit for having kept them from talebearing for at least two hours."

Three Tests Suggested

Well, of course, in modern times we only have a chance to do that for twenty minutes. But we need to understand the positive side of it, and there *is* a positive side. How shall we distinguish from that kind of conversation which is based on mere curiosity—the sort of thing that makes the society page of the newspaper worth while—and that which is talebearing? It's actually very simple. Ask three simple questions: First, would you be willing to have it said of yourself, if it were true? Second, would you be willing to have what you say get back to the person whom you said it about? Third, would you be willing to say it to them personally? And if you cannot answer Yes to all three of those questions, then you ought to close your mouth and lock your lips. Our prayer book puts it this way in the first sentence of that beautiful prayer, the "Silent Devotion," "O God, keep my tongue from evil."

But even more. One way to get air out of a glass is to create a vacuum. A better way to get air out of a glass is simply to fill it with water. The best way to get rid of a vice is to replace it with a virtue. And the virtue which is the opposite of talebearing is the ability to see and speak the good to and about our neighbors. It means that we have to conquer our envy and our jealousy. It means that sometimes we have to judge on the side of merit—judging perhaps for the benefit of the plaintiff by finding motives that will explain actions that we feel perhaps have been harsh or wrong, by being charitable and seeking always the finest and the best. And the remarkable thing is that if we seek it we find it. As a matter of fact, if we find it and praise it, we increase it, as you well know from your dealings with children. Praise of good qualities produces more good qualities.

Now I'm not talking about flattery nor the kind of saccharinity that sickens, but about honest, straightforward praise of goodness. We ought to add to that prayer which says, "Keep my tongue from speaking evil," the prayer of the Chassidic rabbi: "God, grant me the ability to see the best and not the worst in my fellow men." If we can do that we shall turn the worst thing in the world into the best thing in the world, and use this gift of speech as it was meant to be used—in praise of God and in praise of our fellow man.

Can a Preacher Be Saved?

(Continued from page 4)

them that the world would hate them. Even more critical than that, he told them that "the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God." What should make them feel uneasy was the state when everything went smoothly and they became immensely popular. "Woe unto you," said Jesus, "when all men shall speak well of you."

In a world in which Jesus was crowned with thorns, is it reasonable for the disciple to demand that he be crowned with success? The crown of success may be the measure of how far the disciple has deviated from the Master. The Grand Inquisitor, in the legend related by Fyodor Dostoevsky, is the symbol of the successful ecclesiastic. But when Christ returns the churchman is disturbed, for he realizes that his whole way of life is challenged; it simply does not fit into the pattern set up by Jesus Christ. And so he tells Christ, "Go, and come no more . . . come not at all, never, never!" Refusing to wear the crown of thorns his Master wore, he let the crown of success rob him of the crown of life.

Pride, activity, dull preaching, the psychological sciences, personal ambition—these can draw a minister to the road that "leads to destruction." Can a preacher also be saved? Yes—but only through God's grace!

Asking Little and Giving Much

A Palm Sunday Sermon for Children by Lewis H. Davis

EVERY one of us has noticed the beautiful palms decorating our church this morning and we know why they are here. Today is Palm Sunday, the anniversary of the day when Jesus rode into the city of Jerusalem. You remember that as he rode people who loved him spread palm branches in his path to honor him.

Why did they spread palm branches before him? Well, it was the custom in those days to welcome famous men to the city by spreading palm branches before him, just as New York city today welcomes famous men by filling the air and the streets with ticker-tape, confetti and torn-up telephone books. Palm trees were plentiful in Palestine, and presumably also at Jerusalem. The people had to show honor and devotion to Jesus as he rode into the city, so they stripped branches from the palm trees and spread them in his path, as a sign of their love and devotion.

Now when you think of it they could not have chosen a more appropriate symbol than the palm leaf. I have read up a little on palms and find that in all the vegetable kingdom there is probably no other tree that takes so little and gives so much.

In some parts of the world people couldn't live at all unless the palm tree was there to provide for them food, drink, clothing and shelter. Just as the Tibetans are dependent upon the animal called the yak, some people depend upon the palm tree. One famous historian has listed 360 uses of the palm tree in the time of Jesus and I think there are many more uses now. Let me mention just a few: It is used for lumber, rooves, fans, baskets, hats, clothing, ropes, arrow-tips, fish-hooks, collar buttons, street-cleaning machines, fuel, and many hundred more things. And you juniors know it gives food, for you have eaten the dates of the date palms and the cocoanut of the cocoanut palms. In some places of the world, the palm tree is the chief source of food. It gives so very, very much.

Now one of the strange and wonderful things about the palms is this—that although they give so very, very much, they take for themselves very, very little. They take very little or no care at all. Most of the many kinds of palms grow wild and get along without all the coddling that apple and peach trees demand. They take very little water from the soil—they can grow in dry sandy soil. When new islands rise up from the sea, as they sometimes do, it is the palm tree that is often the first plant to win a foothold on the new land—because it needs so little. There is probably no tree among the thousands and thousands of trees that asks so little and gives so much.

Isn't it appropriate, then, that the people of Jerusalem should honor Jesus with branches from the palm tree that in honor of him we should decorate our church with palms? He, like the palm tree, asked so little for himself and gave so much for others.

He asked that people give everything for the Kingdom—their money, their families, their highest loyalty, even their lives; but what did he ask for himself? I can remember only two things that Jesus asked for himself. He asked a Samaritan woman for a drink of water. And he asked a man named Zacchaeus if he could stay at his house for a day. Jesus, like the palm tree, asked very little for himself but gave so much—all he had, his time, his talents, his prayers. He gave healing, friendship, peace of mind, and finally he gave his life. We do well to honor with palm branches on Palm Sunday him who asked for so little for himself and gave so much for others.

LEWIS H. DAVIS is the minister of Prospect Methodist Church, Bristol, Conn., and is president of the Bristol council of churches.

Pulpit Post

More Preachable Material

SIR: Can't you give us more preachable material in The Pulpit? My own interest is in sermon material, particularly illustrations hot from life's griddle. I don't buy The Pulpit for its discussion material. I have read it since its inception and I don't feel discussion of preaching is its legitimate field.

First Baptist, WALTER BISHOP.
Las Vegas, Nev.

SIR: I have just recently come back into the Pulpit family. May I congratulate on the new Pulpit. I am not sure what the controversy over Morton S. Enslin is, but from the two columns I have read I certainly would recommend that he be kept on the payroll.

The Methodist Church, FRANKLIN C. HUBBARD.
Danbury, N. C.

Brilliant Preaching by Unknown Men

SIR: It is heartening to find brilliant preaching in each issue of The Pulpit by men whose names are practically unknown to the Protestant public. It is a vivid reminder that all profundity is not confined to the top thirty names in contemporary preaching.

Village Congregational, ERNEST BODENWEBER, JR.
Cummington, Mass.

Books Preachers Read

SIR: I know that you like to know the fields that your readers are interested in as well as receiving criticism from them from time to time. I have thought that your idea of "Books Preachers are Reading" is an excellent one. I enjoy it a lot.

First Baptist, EARL C. GROSS.
Washington, Pa.

Who is the Seminarian-Preacher of the Year?

THE PULPIT

in cooperation with the Chicago Sunday Evening Club has again invited every senior student now preparing for the ministry in a Theological Seminary to submit a sermon for consideration as the sermon of the year. Only students in a Participating Seminary* are eligible.

The first award will be $100 in cash and an all-expense trip to Chicago where the sermon of the year will be preached at the famous Sunday Evening Club on May 25, 1952. The second award will be $50 in cash, and the third award will be $25 in cash. There will also be seven Honorable Mention awards. (See the November Pulpit for complete details.)

This annual selection of the Seminarian Preacher of the Year has met with enthusiastic approval on the part of the leading seminaries of the country. Replies from theological schools whose students had submitted sermons last year reflect high praise for this project to encourage more effective preaching. Is your school among those who have made application to be a Participating Seminary?

The final selection will be made by the following Board of Judges:

GERALD KENNEDY,
Bishop of the Methodist Church, Portland, Ore.

BRADSHAW MINTENER,
Vice-President, Pillsbury Mills, and prominent Methodist layman

OSCAR F. BLACKWELDER,
Pastor, Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, D. C.

ROBERT J. McCRACKEN,
Minister, The Riverside Church, New York

A. MILTON SMITH,
Minister, First Church of the Nazarene, Kansas City, Mo.

ALTON M. MOTTER,
Executive Director, The Chicago Sunday Evening Club

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS,
Managing Editor, The Pulpit

Seminaries desiring to participate in accordance with the rules of the selection are urged to register before the deadline, March 1, 1952. *Every* student in *every* seminary should have an opportunity to win the major award!

*A participating theological seminary is one which notifies The Pulpit in writing not later than March 1, 1952 that, by official action of the faculty, the seminary desires to participate in the selection and agrees to the following rules:

(a) Each participating seminary will appoint a local committee of judges, composed of not less than three (3) members, who shall carefully consider all candidates for the selection.

(b) Candidates shall be judged on the following bases: content and construction of sermon submitted, 60 percent; delivery and pulpit poise, 30 percent; personableness of the candidate, 10 percent.

(c) All sermons must be original and not previously published.

(d) The local committee of judges will nominate to The Pulpit not later than March 15, 1952 the names of not more than three (3) eligible candidates for the selection together with the sermon submitted by each of the candidates, in duplicate typewritten copies, and a statement of not more than 200 words describing each candidate's delivery, pulpit poise and personableness. All nominations will be addressed to The Board of Judges, c/o The Pulpit, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. All manuscripts submitted become the property of The Pulpit. None will be returned.

Inquiries concerning the selection should be addressed to

THE PULPIT

407 S. DEARBORN STREET **CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS**

Thomas Curtis Clark

Selected poems from "Christ in Poetry," edited by Thomas Curtis Clark and Hazel Davis Clark and published by Association Press, Feb. 27th

The Christ Who Lives

To Mary, Mother of Christ

I, being Protestant, can never bow
The knee to you, sweet mother of our Lord,
And yet I am a woman and I know
The same bewilderment and fears,
The same necessity for secret tears
That sore beset you. Now
I, being Protestant, can only stand
Here by your side and touch your woman's hand
Across the centuries that intervene,
The tides of peace and war that flow between
Your day and mine; can seek in our accord
Your seal of woman's courage on my brow,
Knowing that when your firstborn died
Upon his cross you too were crucified.

UNA W. HARSEN.

The Carpenter of Galilee

The Carpenter of Galilee
Comes down the street again,
In every land, in every age,
He still is building men.

On Christmas Eve we hear him knock;
He goes from door to door:
"Are any workmen out of work?
The Carpenter needs more."

HILDA W. SMITH.

It Is Not Finished, Lord

It is not finished, Lord.
There is not one thing done.
There is no battle of my life
That I have really won.
And now I, come to tell Thee
How I fought to fail.
I cannot read the writing of the years;
My eyes are full of tears.
It gets all blurred and won't make sense.
It's full of contradictions
Like the scribblings of a child.
I can but hand it in, and hope
That Thy great mind, which reads
The writings of so many lives,
Will understand this scrawl
And what it strives
To say—but leaves unsaid.
I cannot write it over.
The stars are coming out.
My body needs its bed.
I have no strength for more,
So it must stand or fall, dear Lord!—
That's all.

G. A. STUDDERT-KENNEDY.

Easter Message

Almost two thousand years ago today
The stone upon His grave was rolled away,
And in the blinding darkness of the tomb
He rose and shattered there the grief and gloom
Within the hearts of those who worshiped Him.
Although that day and time have now grown dim,
One message through the ages has been hurled:
His love is hope and light for all the world.
And as the dawn of Easter fills the skies
We, too, with Him in spirit must arise;
For even underneath us in the earth
There is a faithful promise of rebirth.
If there's a stone against your heart today,
Look up to Him and it will roll away.

JOHN VAN BRAKLE.

Sight

In Nazareth he knew each narrow street,
The twisted paths that up the hillside crept,
The gleam of Galilee, where many a fleet
Of white-sailed vessels moved. He knew where swept
The terror of the ruthless Roman swords;
And, as he deftly planed his shining boards,
Of men, like books, he read the souls of them;
Yet, "set his face toward Jerusalem."

Past the long, tortured road his spirit saw,
Further than broken lives, than ancient law,
Beyond the scourge, the cross, the bitter death,
His vision cast its flaming, living breath.

Two thousand years! And still we grope for light!
Have mercy on us, Lord, and give us sight.

IDA NORTON MUNSON.

Palm Sunday and Monday

They pluck their palm branches and hail him as King,
Early on Sunday;
They spread out their garments; hosannas they sing,
Early on Sunday.
But where is the noise of their hurrying feet,
The crown they would offer, the scepter, the seat?
Their King wanders hungry, forgot in the street,
Early on Monday.

EDWIN MCNEILL POTEAT.

"If a Man Die, Shall He Live Again?"

I will repudiate the lie
Men tell of life;
How it will pass
As fragile flower, or butterfly,
Whose dust shall nourish
April grass.

Since One, for love, died on a tree
And in the stony
Tomb was lain,
Behold I show a mystery:
All sepulchres
Are sealed in vain!

JOHN RICHARD MORELAND.

Hands of Christ

Hands of Christ,
Divine hands of a carpenter. . . .
I cannot imagine those hands
Forging lances, anviling swords,
Or designing a new model of bomber;
Those hands, hands of Christ,
Were the hands of a carpenter.

Hands of Christ, calloused
Carving cradles,
Shaping plows, building life. . . .
I cannot imagine those hands
Busied with cannon,
Explosive and grenades;
Those calloused hands
Became calloused building life.

Among the feverish hands
That build cruisers
And bombers,
His hands are not found!
His bear the marks of nails,
Heroic marks of sacrifice;
Those hands, bleeding hands,
Strong, steel-nerved hands,
Are the vigorous hands of a carpenter
Quietly building life.

FRANCISCO E. ESTRELLO.
(Translated by H. M. Sein.)

A Certain Saturday

Lost day
When hope was sealed in its integument.
Day of dark gestation.
Nameless day
Slipping quietly between the drama of a Friday
And the glory of a Sunday.
Rest, pause, muted time-beat,
Symbol of so many of our days
Wherein we only grow invisibly,
Wherein we only climb and do not know it.
Day torn between the grasping hands
Of the past and the future.
Aerial hollow nestling between the two flaming wings
Of a sunset and a sunrise.

EDITH LOVEJOY PIERCE.

Bread

He knew what hunger a man can feel,
So he broke the fishes and bread
That the weary thousands who followed him
Might be strengthened and fed.

He knew what hunger a soul can feel,
Sharing the husks with swine,
So he gave his broken body and blood
For bread and wine.

LESLIE SAVAGE CLARK.

Free Enterprise

Three workmen fashioning a cross
On which a fourth must die!
Yet none of any other asked,
"And why? And why? And why?"

Said they: "This is our business,
Our living we must earn;
What happens to the other man
Is none of our concern!"

CLYDE MCGEE.

Master Surgeon

Men at the council tables,
The map of the world lies before you
Like a broken body.
You are the surgeons in consultation,
Stroking your beards,
Tapping your fingers.
Sharp words are shot from your lips,
Angry gestures flung from your hands.

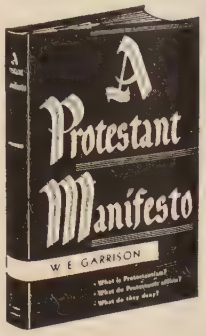
The broken body tosses while you quarrel,
The broken body moans while you wrangle.

There is only one Surgeon who can heal.
His eyes are wide with compassion.
His mouth is soft with sympathy.
His hands . . . Look! Are they not spiked with nails?
He stands at your sides ready with his healing.
See him out and listen, men at the council tables,
For only his wisdom can heal
The broken, moaning body of the world.

LUCIA TRENT.

(Continued on page 23)

Timely and Usable



A PROTESTANT MANIFESTO

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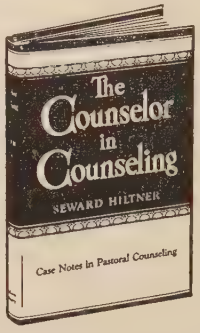

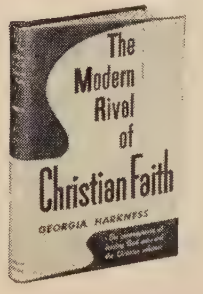

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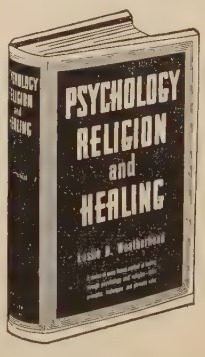

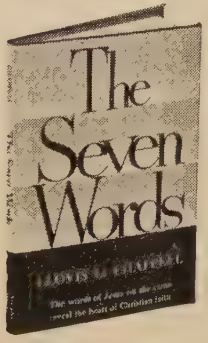

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

An Item for the 'Index'

WORDS are slippery things. Again and again they mean what the person using them wants them to mean. In consequence, all sorts of difficulties and misunderstandings arise. At times words are far more valuable in disguising thought than in revealing it. Not infrequently, when I have asked an acquaintance with whom I was talking precisely what he meant by a certain word which he had just used with unction, he has started to define it by repeating the word itself with a bit more sententious emphasis.

There are some words which, it seems to me, should be taken out of circulation for a while, put on an *index expurgatorius* for a season. We use them so freely, especially in the pulpit; and we are so muddy in our thinking about them. Actually they are much like slang—an easy short-cut way to label something which we should have considerable difficulty discussing in simple nontechnical terms. There are several such words which I should like to see withdrawn, at least temporarily, from circulation. The word "spiritual" would surely head the list.

Some time ago, in a meeting of professional theologians and philosophers, the discussion became lively, even heated. The problem at hand was the difficulty in discovering any common ground on which, so to speak, we might stand for an instant to catch our breaths, even if it should not prove a permanent resting place. Finally one of the most eminent of the group rose. The unhurried, even stately, way in which he got to his feet made very evident that now we were going to hear something. We did. Said he, in that round full voice which always seems to suggest finality, "Surely we can all find a common meeting ground in a spiritual approach to reality."

Once again I disgraced myself. I burst into a hearty and, I fear, loud laugh. It so happened that a few days before in class this word "spiritual" had been under discussion. A verse in one of the Gospels was being considered. One of the students was dissatisfied with the proposed exegesis and countered, "Professor, shouldn't this verse be interpreted spiritually instead of historically as you are doing?" A few questions judiciously phrased soon made it clear that what he meant by "spiritually" was really "allegorically."

In the third century Origen ran into grave difficulties. He was arguing against an unwarranted anthropomorphizing of God. God, said he, was not material. So to regard him was pagan. Now Christians in every age—our own as well as Origen's—have been very fond of doing precisely that to God, and Origen's hearers were scandalized. They crystallized their outraged protests in a verse from the Gospel of John which proved to their complete satisfaction that God was material, at least had a body, and that Origen was dead wrong in denying it. And the verse was? Why, "God is a spirit." "And," said they triumphantly, "everyone knows that spirit is material; a fine and subtle sort of material, yes; but nonetheless material." That was what "spiritual" meant in some circles. Does it today? Certainly it is the notion behind Paul's perplexing word about a "spiritual body."

To others it has come to signify the opposite of "worldly." Thus a man is said to be "spiritual" if he doesn't drink or smoke or go the movies or appear to enjoy what most people consider pleasant. Thus, when my good friend the theologian believed that we could all unite in a "spiritual approach," he was unwittingly giving aid and comfort to many who would be eager to resuscitate the old and vicious cleavage between the church and the world, the holy and the profane, the sacred and the secular, the "spiritual" and the worldly or—God save the mark—the "carnal."

I pass by such other meanings as "spiritualistic," "intellectual," "spirited" and "spiritous." Yes, I confess I should rest more easy if, instead of using as a foundation block on which to build a united church and a united world a spherical word like this, ready to roll in almost any direction, we had sense enough to lay it aside for the moment as having become so encrusted with so many different notions that it is far more likely to undermine understanding and agreement than to solidify them. Instead it would be a wholesome task to try to set forth in simple, unambiguous, nontechnical, and nonholy-sounding words just what we think we mean.

And just think of the possible dividends! Someone at the door might

vary the Sabbath-noon monotony of "That was a spiritual message" and instead say, "That was an intelligent sermon." (Yes, I am quite aware of what happened to Socrates.)

'Christ in Poetry'

(Continued from page 21)

The Lost Christ

Where have we laid him now,
This Christ we once so sadly
placed within a tomb?
So often we have buried him
safely stowed away, where
we could come to worship
and anoint!
We have wrapped him in the trappings
of the altar,
and rolled the stone of creed
against his tomb.
We have dug his grave in busyness
and repeatedly interred him
in committee. . . .
But always, when we look to find him
where we laid him,
the voice of faith proclaims:
"He is not here. He is risen.
He goeth before you!"

FRANKLIN D. ELMER, JR.

The Jericho Road

I know the road to Jericho,
It's in a part of town
That's full of factories and filth.
I've seen the folk go down,

Small folk with roses in their cheeks
And starlight in their eyes,
And seen them fall among the thieves,
And heard their helpless cries

When toiling took their roses red
And robbed them of their stars
And left them pale and almost dead.
The while, in motorcars

The priests and Levites speeding by
Read of the latest crimes
In headlines spread in black or red
Across the "Evening Times."

How hard for those in limousines
To heal the hurt of man!
It was a slow-paced ass that bore
The Good Samaritan.

EDWIN MCNEILL POTEAT.

Christ on Madison Street

I looked for Christ on Madison Street
Where men went by with stumbling
feet,
Where heads were bowed in the dark-
ness there
Of gray clouds hanging low in the air.

I looked for him, a vision of white—
But gay burlesques with their crimson
light
Have led my steps to a darker place
Where smoke of passion hid Christ's
face.

I looked for Christ in the hidden skies,
A flaming vision to blind my eyes—
While Christ walked by with stum-
bling feet
Along with the men of Madison Street.

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

The Church Militant

by HAROLD A. BOSLEY

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Religion and Politics*

NEVER mix religion and politics! How often have you heard that right-sounding but wrong expression? Life is not neatly compartmentalized—one section for citizenship in a kingdom of the world and another for citizenship in the Kingdom of God. Life involves that total personality which either is Christian in church, in business and in politics or isn't Christian at all. No separation is possible between one's Christianity and one's daily living. One cannot serve God and mammon, God and politics, or God and business, but one must (if he is a Christian) serve God with mammon, with politics and with business. The Christian is the continuing agent of God's design in our world now. Though no Christian ever fully represents God's will, he has been called to bear witness to the truth not only in the spiritual but also in the economic and political spheres. Religion must be mixed with politics lest honor and justice and loyalty become obsolete characteristics of past generations. This does not mean that the church should ever be identified with any particular political party or form of government. (We fall prey so easily to the illusion that Christianity is synonymous with democracy and that all other forms of government are unchristian.) The church stands above all government, pointing out God's purpose in history and God's will beyond history. Every Christian is involved in this responsibility, the accomplishment of which necessitates the mixing of religion and politics.—*Dale S. Bringman, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Harrisburg, Pa.*

• *'Christ Is the Answer'*

SOME years ago, with other ministers in the city where I was then pastor, we tried to find a slogan or catchword that we might use during the Lenten season to interest people in the community in religious services. We decided on the phrase, "Christ Is the Answer." We had it painted on several banners and hung them across the main streets. In the services we pointed to the failure to solve the problems of our day through either intelligence or force—through world government or V-J Day. Yet the meetings were not crowded; only the faithful came, the small group who, out of love and loyalty, always support the worthwhile things in a community. The ones whom we really desired to reach in that special series of meetings simply refused to come and ask the questions for which Christ would be the answer; unconcernedly they went their way, lonely and defeated.

We are still muddling along in nearly every phase of life you might mention—in international relations, which we call the cold war; in moral standards, which are now being investigated by Congress as it looks into the gambling syndicates and the life of the vice lords who rule so many cities; in our youth problem, which has captured the headlines in nearly every major city. Perhaps our failure can be measured by a fact recently headlined in one of our local papers: that not only are Nebraska's mental hospitals filled to overflowing, but there is a waiting list of 500. Thousands in this wide-open prairie state have broken down under the tensions of living. Why? Is it because they refused to seek the answer where alone it can be found? How desperately we need to go back to the spirit of the New Testament, where it is written that "Jesus is the Christ" and that, believing in him, we may have life.—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

Pulpit Calendar

Feb. 27—Ash Wednesday. Beginning of Lent.
Feb. 29—World Day of Prayer.
Mar. 2—First Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 9—Second Sunday in Lent. Day of Prayer for Students
Mar. 16—Third Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 23—Fourth Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 25—The Annunciation.
Mar. 30—Passion Sunday.
Apr. 6—Palm Sunday.
Apr. 6-12—Holy Week.
Apr. 10—Maundy Thursday.
Apr. 11—Good Friday.
Apr. 12—Easter Eve.
Apr. 13—Easter.
Apr. 20—First Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 27—Second Sunday after Easter. National Christian College Sunday.
May 4—Third Sunday after Easter.
May 4-11—National Family Week.
May 11—Fourth Sunday after Easter. Festival of the Christian Home (Mother's Day).
May 18—Fifth Sunday after Easter. Rural Life Sunday.
May 22—Ascension Day.
May 25—Sunday after Ascension.
May 30—Memorial Day.
June 1—Whitsunday (Pentecost). Christian Unity Sunday.

SEASONS: Lent, Eastertide. Whitsuntide.

ALTAR COLORS: Lent, violet; Maundy Thursday, white; Good Friday, black; Easter Eve, black or bare; Easter and Eastertide, white; Whitsunday, white.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

• *Make Up Your Mind About Christ*

SOME years ago an article in the London *Times* said that "Christianity as expounded on the higher levels today seems to be less and less distinguishable from feebleness of mind. . . . In the years between the wars our main fault was that we tried Christianity too hard." That was a common point of view, in those days expressed most often, I think, about the Japanese. "In the years between the two world wars," people said, "we tried to be Christian with them, and see what we got! Pearl Harbor!" That was a common point of view, but it fell far short of the facts. If we tried to be Christian toward the Japanese in the years between the two world wars, it was often a strange brand of Christianity that we used. We refused them the right of immigration for reasons of race which our own Christian faith repudiated. We sold them scrap metals for fighting a war which our own Christian faith declared to be insful. And then in secret conference before Pearl Harbor our own secretary of war was urging that this Christian nation do the very thing for which now we castigate Japan so soundly—strike suddenly against the Japanese ourselves, make a Pearl Harbor of our own.

To say that this nation or any nation has ever tried Christianity too hard is to betray an ignorance of history or Christianity or both. The truth is that our foreign policy today is rendered almost totally ineffective by our inability as a nation to make up our minds about Christ. On the one hand, if we could repudiate him completely, call him not friend but foe, turn our backs upon him and have no qualms of conscience in the dodging of it—then our nation could at least have a consistent foreign policy. It could move in one direction today and know that tomorrow it would want to go in the same direction. To be sure, it would be headed toward imperialism; it would be hated and feared by the other nations of the world; and in the end it would go the way of every other empire the world has ever known.—*Roy M. Pearson, Hancock Congregational, Lexington, Mass.*

• *The Gospel for an Age of Fear*

TODAY we face a world of stark tragedy. The return to a vital religion is imperative because man needs what it confers—salvation from himself to himself, courage to stand whatever happens in a world like this

and make the most of it. Too long we have known machinery better than ourselves. We are now in a conflict on two fronts, the world without and the world within.

In the Gadarene demoniac, all the fears that possessed him at various times had found residence till they were "legion" (Mark 5:9). We are informed that half of the hospital beds in our country are occupied by victims of mental ailments. Man is rapidly moving toward the conquest of natural forces, but he hasn't yet conquered himself. This is a moral and spiritual achievement. For this remedy for our worst social maladjustments—war, race and class hatreds — we prayerfully wait. It is safe to say that man's chief trouble in the days ahead will be connected with the mastery not of nature but of human nature. All our boasted progress will be of no value unless moral mastery keeps pace with the mastery of mind over matter and natural forces.

We are in need of a realistic faith to help bewildered people live above their fears and find an adequate philosophy of life in critical times. It was during such times that Jesus spoke these words: "Fear not, little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Luke 12:32). This is a testing time. Whatever the test before us may be, our own response will determine whether we will be dominated by our fears or persuaded that, come what may, nothing can daunt our confidence or destroy our faith that God is at the controls of the universe and we must be obedient servants of his will.

Our faith as the faith of the Master must mean that we can stand whatever we must suffer. If the cross was God's will for him, we too must take up our cross. This is true of the nation as of the individual. This present conflict may prove to be our Calvary, but if it means world redemption, God's will be done.—*Edgar A. Lowther, Methodist Church of Petaluma, Calif.*

• *Living Under Scrutiny*

IN a recent play, a man who identifies himself as an inspector from the police department drops in on a very respectable family just as they have completed their dinner. He reports that a young woman has committed suicide. Then, with member after member of this particular family, he proceeds to demonstrate how all of them are implicated in this unhappy event: the father by the fact that he had dismissed her from his factory a couple of years earlier; the daughter by having had her discharged as a sales person because of some slight irritation a few weeks before at a fashionable shop; the mother by refusing the assistance of her charity organization; and so on around the family. There is nothing left to do but for each to confess his guilt, and it's a pitiful scene they present. After the inspector has left, however, one of the family decides to find out what's behind all this. He calls the police department and finds there is no such inspector employed there. He calls the morgue and there has been no suicide case in many months. A wave of relief passes over these people. But the fact remains, as the daughter alone discerns, that whether any immediate tragedy has occurred or not, each one of them has been guilty of doing what their unknown visitor accused them of. Who is the inspector? The play does not provide the answer, and indeed it does not matter. All of us have encountered people whose obvious integrity makes it seem as though our own lives were standing under scrutiny, people whose presence makes us aware that all the assumptions by which we live are called to account.—*E. K. Roberts, Merriam Park Presbyterian, St. Paul, Minn.*

Good Man

There was a young parson in Macon
Who knew how to bring home the bacon.
Every church with a debt
Did its darndest to get
This businesslike parson of Macon.

GRAHAM R. HODGES.

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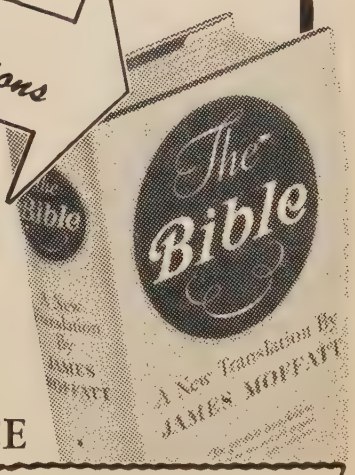

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• *Minute Message for Modern Man*

RUFUS M. JONES points out the difference between a merry-go-round and a canal lock. On a merry-go-round you do a lot of traveling, but you get off at the same place you got on. In a canal lock you don't travel anywhere, but you are lifted to a higher level.—*Robert A. Mulligan, Richard Street Methodist, Joliet, Ill.*

• *'Our Failin's Too'*

IN *Gone With the Wind* there appears a eulogy for Gerald O'Hara by one of his neighbors. After recounting how none of the troubles and hardships from without could defeat O'Hara or any of the rest of them in life, the neighbor continues: "But he had our failin's too, 'cause he could be licked from the inside. I mean to say that what the whole world couldn't do, his own heart could. All you all and me, too, are like him. We got the same weakness and failin'. There ain't nothin' that walks can lick us, any more than it could lick him, not Yankees or carpetbaggers nor hard times nor high taxes nor even downright starvation. But that weakness that's in our hearts can lick us in the time it takes to bat your eye."—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, U. S. Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.*

New Testament Windows

God's Poem

IN Ephesians 2:10 we read, "We are God's workmanship." The word rendered "workmanship" is ποίημα, which means "something made." From ποίημα we derive our English word "poem." A related noun is ποιητής, which means "maker" or "doer" (Rom. 2:13; James 1:22, 23,25; 4:11), or "poet" (Acts 17:28). How wonderful to think of each human life as a poem in the making, God himself being the Eternal Poet, the Maker! More wonderful yet to think of our lives as all being part of his great poem of humanity, in which some day the Incarnation will be complete!

It is interesting to note that before poetic art was called "making" it was called "singing." The gospel is good news set to music. We are God's poem "created in Christ Jesus." Through him we can "go singing" in every circumstance. Dante writes of souls singing in the cleansing fire (*Purgatory*, Canto 27, line 12). The New Testament furnishes inspiring examples of singing in times of testing (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25). Christians have a new song to sing while they are becoming themselves part of God's oratorio of the ages.

J. RUSSELL CARPENTER.

Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Review of a New Hymnal

AN attractive, remarkable, unusual new hymnal is AT WORSHIP, A HYMNAL FOR YOUNG CHURCHMEN, prepared and edited by **Roy Burkhart, W. Richard Weagly** and **Hazel R. Brownson** (Harper, $2; 25 or more copies, $1.75 each). This volume of 416 pages contains 315 hymns, 19 worship services, and 13 complete and exhaustive indexes. It is beautifully bound in rich maroon washable fabrikoid. Advertised as "the best of the old, the choicest of the new," the 315 hymns and 75 pages of worship material are arranged under five topics: God the Creator; God and the Self; Resources; Commitments; Destiny. Of the authors, Poet Charles Wesley and Translator John M. Neale lead with ten hymns each, followed by Poet Isaac Watts and Translator Catherine Winkworth with six hymns each. While twelve Welsh tunes are included, Bach and Dykes lead individual composers with eleven tunes each.

To the credit of the editors, there is little or no tampering with, editing of or substituting for the original words, phrases and stanzas. The inclusion of a third stanza, beginning, "Alleluia, now we cry, To our King Immortal," would have completed the two stanzas of No. 157, "Come ye faithful, raise the strain." And "Blest be the tie that binds," No. 257, hardly seems the same without the verse "When we asunder part," since it gives meaning to the final stanza, which is included. Of Fawcett's six original stanzas, the fifth and sixth could well be omitted, but not the fourth! However, the addition of the impressive third stanza, "I would be prayerful through each busy moment," to "I would be true," No. 60, more than compensates for these omissions.

Since, with the exception of *Dundee, Christmas* and *Old Hundredth*, which occur twice, the other 312 tunes appear but once, the volume's helpfulness would have been increased by the addition of a line at the bottom of several pages suggesting alternate tunes and where they could be found in the book. The first five chords of the tune *Hanover*, matched with "O worship the king," No. 76, are exactly like the first five chords of the more familiar tune *Lyons*, to which this hymn is generally sung. The statement, "Alternate tune, *Lyons*, No. 161," would prepare singers for the unexpected change in the melody. Also, since "Lead on, O king eternal," No. 231, is matched with the rather unfamiliar tune *Liangloffan*, a note to the effect that the well known tune *Lancashire* appears as hymn No. 156 would save many a pianist the agony of trying to run down the name and location of that tune.

The appearance of 15 tunes in the key of E major leads one to wonder whether average musicians can handle a tune in four sharps, plus the usual accidentals. Maybe they should, but they don't! The key may add brightness to the music, but the lowering of the key to E flat would ease many a pianist's troubled mind. Since most of them are going to play the music in flats anyway, the editors could have concurred.

Some of the newer tunes are strong on chords and weak on melody; consequently one looks in vain for the lilting strains of "Follow the gleam," which is acceptable because it is about as sentimental as average young churchmen and churchwomen. Again, maybe they ought not so to be, but they are; and a flowing melody is always welcome. The tune *Dundee* appears twice, No. 90 and No. 199—the first time with all quarter-notes, the second time with eight half-notes doubling the time of the first and last notes of each of the four lines. This is bound to create confusion, especially should an unwary chairman select both hymns for the same service.

The selection of 315 hymns from the thousands available, the difficulties involved in securing and paying copyright permission, the individual preferences and peculiarities of editors and committees, the limitations of size and cost, make the preparation of a universally acceptable hymnal almost impossible. Whether the stanzas will be accepted by the church as worthy successors of Watts and Heber, and the tunes as equals of Mason and Dykes, remains to be seen. The editors are to be congratulated for encouraging new poets and composers by accepting their works for a volume as well prepared as this one.

Sermon Summaries

God Is No Indian Giver

For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29.

PAUL was not bothered by the problem of modern relevance. Mulling over in his mind the implications of the Jewish refusal to accept the gospel, he declares without reservation that the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. God does not go back on his gifts or his calling. In the language of childhood banter, God is no "Indian giver."

What a tremendous implication this courageous stand of Paul's has for our day. Living in an age of cultural transition, how is the modern Christian to meet and satisfy the age-old demands of our traditional faith? On this matter of stewardship, how can I answer the call of God in light of the demands of the lodge, the community chest, the union and the home? Or the problem of humility. In a business world that writes its paychecks largely upon the principle of survival of the fittest, how can a man afford to be humble? It works in the cloister but it's death on Main Street! How can a young person living in an age of sensual glorification meet the demands of God for wholesome and virtuous living? How can an intelligent modern accept the spiritual basis of a literature such as the Bible, produced by an antique people steeped in primitive thought and custom? Can God really require the daily maintenance of a family altar in the face of our modern helter-skelter schedules? Can the call of God through Christ for love to one's enemies really be relevant to our day in face of the dastardly techniques of the Commies?

There are two important implications of this text. The first is that the call of God is a continuing call. Wherever man meets God experientially, he finds the call of God, whether it be in the temple, the desert, or on a bed of rock, and the result is always the same—a life changed, a family made happier or a nation purified. God's call is never conditioned by the presence of burning bushes, tornadoes, wind or fire; but wherever man walks with his soul in tune with the universe he hears the still small voice. The only limitation is the condition of the heart of man.

The second implication is that there is a relatedness between the gifts of God and the call of God. The highest form of living is that which evokes a sense of responsibility in the recipient. The world is full of people who have accepted the gifts of God but shun the responsibilities of the gift. We often miss the benevolence of God because we are looking for handouts. We fail to realize that the greatest gifts are those that produce character, personality and spiritual response on the part of receiver.

Remember then, Christian of 1952, the call of God to righteousness, temperance, prayer, humility and brotherhood still rings from the pages of God's Word. As surely as he gave them to Isaiah, Jeremiah and the prophets, he gives them to us. His gifts and his call are irrevocable. He is no Indian giver.—*Robert Edward McBride, E.U.B. Church, Clayton, Ohio.*

Elevation

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke 18:1

Hills and mountains level out
When looked on from the air;
Our problems seem to dwindle, too,
When seen from heights of prayer.

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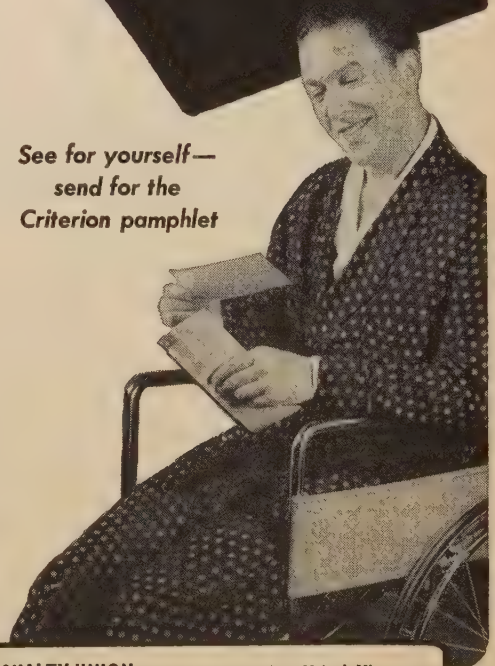

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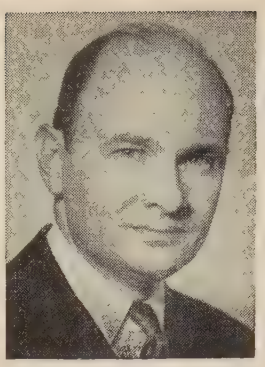


Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

Worship As An Art

NOT long ago I visited a service that was very disquieting. The setting was a beautiful Georgian building. Though the church might have clung to a New England hillside, it was set at the head of a park in a modern city. Its graceful lines gave every indication of poise and repose. The natural light of the out-of-doors filled the interior, which was as restful and comforting to the eye as any colonial church could be.

In such a church building the whole service could have given one a sense of repose: all tensions held in fine equilibrium by the inevitable answer of post and lintel, a sense of illimitable resources ready to be used if necessary.

Unfortunately, the ordering of the service and its celebration belied the architecture of its setting. It is always a disquieting experience to meet a contradiction in the instruments of worship. The setting was one of repose but the service suggested nervous uncertainty. Had the service complemented the setting, all of us, as worshipers, would have been brought to a fine sense of the fact that our lives forever rest in the God of all comfort and strength.

The service moved along somewhat as follows: After the processional hymn the choir and minister engaged in a call to worship and invocation that concluded with the Lord's Prayer. Following this, there was a service of baptism which concluded with a congregational hymn. Following the hymn there was a Scripture reading by the assistant pastor, after which the congregation arose for the Gloria Patri. Then the choir sang for us, their anthem being followed by some exercises of public prayer. The offering was then received, during which time the choir sang a second anthem, which was followed by the rising of the congregation for the doxology. After this the sermon was preached, then the congregation stood for the recessional hymn, were seated for the benediction and choral response, and then arose to leave the church.

While this order is in your mind, let me point out that the congregation had to rise six separate times and that the pastor and his assistant spoke an equal number of times during the course of this service. There was a constant coming and going, a rising and sitting, a breaking-in of the pastor's voice, and other expressions of nervous instability.

In other words, this service failed at the point of artistry. Certain individual items were good, such as the pastoral prayer, but they were not well arranged, nor were they adequately joined together. The service was jerky, the worshiper did not feel that one movement of the liturgy naturally emerged out of the preceding movement. It was a program rather than a service. This is another way of saying that the service lacked continuity. It broke down at the point of its transitions and at the point of its movement toward climactic purpose.

Our pastors and leaders of worship need to know that divine worship is an *art*. This is not to say that worship does not have a theological basis, or that it is not rooted in religious experience. We assume all of that, as you will remember from our opening discussions in this column. Worship finally comes to life, however, through the artistry of its public expression. Men who do not know this, or who deny it, or who cover their own liturgical confusion by sentimental ranting, simply do not know the score. A service can be helpful or confusing, made or broken, at the point of its artistry.

This is not a plea for an embellished worship, or even a beautified one. God forbid that we lard our services with that kind of subjective bait. Rather, this is a plea for that kind of fundamental design in the order of the liturgy that would distinguish any art. It is a plea for that kind of intelligent, creative and sympathetic interpretation of the liturgy that would distinguish any artist, such as a conductor who, with his orchestra, reads a score well. Like a conductor, the leader of worship must have a good score—namely, a sound liturgy—and the ability and instrumentation to read it well. This calls for a sympathetic understanding on his own part, for artistry in his own public expression and ceremonial movement in the chancel, and, of course, it calls for preparation and ability on the part of organist and choristers.

In my opinion, there are six basic factors which make for the best artistry in worship. I shall discuss these factors in this column next month.

Preachers in Print

'Christ in Poetry'

POETRY which expresses the deep insights of the Christian faith has always been among the preacher's most valuable aids. This has been true from Isaiah, Jeremiah and Paul to the preacher of today. The poet has a way of stating his conviction and experience which can add weight to the message of the prophet.

One of the most helpful anthologies to appear in recent years is ★★★★CHRIST IN POETRY (Association Press, $3.49), edited and compiled by a former editor of this journal, Thomas Curtis Clark, and his wife, Hazel Davis Clark. To the preachers of this generation, the name of Thomas Curtis Clark has been synonymous with fine religious poetry. His QUOTABLE POEMS continues to occupy a preferred position on the desks and library shelves of most American pastors. As the poetry editor of the *Christian Century* for more than 25 years, he was in a strategic position, with the able assistance of Mrs. Clark, to complete the present volume. In this position he was privileged to pass editorially on much of the better religious poetry that has appeared during the years since World War I. During this period he has written or edited over 25 volumes and has justly earned the title, "Poet Laureate of Protestantism."

As the title indicates, the anthology consists of poems classified under major divisions of the life of Christ: Nativity, In Nazareth, The Man Christ Jesus, The Way of the Cross, The Continuing Calvary, Resurrection, Come Follow Me, The Continuing Christ, The Revolutionist, The Lost Christ, and The Triumphant Christ. The 529 poems were contributed by 282 poets ranging from Bernard of Clairvaux, Browning, Tennyson and Longfellow to Edwin Markham, John Oxenham, Edith Lovejoy Pierce, William Stidger and G. A. Studdert-Kennedy. Many readers will find a host of new names whose poetry is both enjoyable and spiritually stimulating. For this reviewer, this was especially true of the poems of Raymond Kresensky, John Richard Moreland, Ida Norton Munson and Edwin McNeill Poteat. The contemporary quality of the poetry is indicated by the fact that 90 per cent of the poems were written during this century. The poems from this new volume appearing in this column and on page 20 indicates that here is new help and power for the preacher.

ALTON M. MOTTER.

A Virile Christ

Give us a virile Christ for these rough days!
You painters, sculptors, show the warrior bold;
And you who turn mere words to gleaming gold,
Too long your lips have sounded in the praise
Of patience and humility. Our ways
Have parted from the quietude of old;
We need a man of strength with us to hold
The very breach of Death without amaze.
Did he not scourge from temple courts the thieves?
And make the arch-fiend's self again to fall?
And blast the fig tree that was only leaves?
And still the raging tumult of the seas?
Did he not bear the greatest pain of all,
Silent, upon the cross on Calvary?

REX BOUNDY.

ROUNDUP

★★★RUFUS JONES SPEAKS TO OUR TIMES, an anthology edited by **Harry Emerson Fosdick.** Macmillan, $4.00. No greater tribute can be offered to a great man than for another great man to offer as a labor of love and gratitude to edit the great writings of the former. This is done in the introduction. Dr. Fosdick says that as a young man he was confused by the theological wrangle of his time. He then ran across Rufus Jones' book *Social Law in the Spiritual World.* "That book," says Dr. Fosdick, "opened the door of a new era in my thought and life." Dr. Fosdick has gone through the rich writings of Rufus Jones and offers them as a posthumous tribute to a great soul. But even more he has offered them to all who are motivated to read them. They will go down in the history of Christian thought along with the great writings of some of the magnificent scholastics of the Middle Ages; along with the writings of Martin Luther, John Wesley and others. They are inspired literature.

So many modern-day sermons are filled with superficial thinking which sparkle merely with bright illustrations that people become ill nourished from such spiritual pablum. Reading Dr. Jones' stirs insights in everything from "What's the matter with the church?" to "Theological questions on the doctrine of man and the psychological problems of individual and mental health." One feels that here is a meal of good, rugged whole wheat with the germ still present; the kind of bread of life that fills a man—none of this mixture of wind and paste and water which goes to make up most of the pallid bread offered in handsome wrappers by many religious writers.

Rufus Jones likewise shows his brilliant wit in many anecdotes which are not only powerful illustrations but delightful stories for the raconteur. Sometimes the reading is a bit heavy, as indeed the subjects are, but no thoroughly rounded Christian thinker should be without such an anthology of one of the great thinkers of our generation.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

★★SHOULD I RETIRE? By **George H. Preston, M.D.** Rinehart, $2.50. Dr. Preston approaches this question from a new point of view. To retire successfully does not require an *income* so much as an *outlook.* With well illustrated chapters on how to prepare for the right sort of old age, he makes the "heart leap up when it beholds" a pension in the by and by. Well worth reading by any overworked minister (are there any other kind?).—*Robert I. Kahn, Rabbi, Congregation Emanu El, Houston, Tex.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

January	February	This Month	*An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.*
		1	**A Man Called Peter.** *Catherine Marshall. McGraw,* **$3.50**
		2	**Questions People Ask.** *Robert J. McCracken. Harper,* **$2.50**
9	9	3	**The Interpreter's Bible.** *Vol. VII. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* **$8.75**
1	1	4	**The Life We Prize.** *Elton Trueblood. Harper,* **$2.50**
		5	**The Practice of Evangelism.** *Bryan Green. Scribner,* **$3.00**
		6	**The Seven Words.** *Clovis G. Chappel. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* **$1.00**
		7	**By the Way: An Autobiography.** *Francis J. McConnell. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* **$3.50**
		8	**Rufus Jones Speaks to Our Times.** *Edited by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Macmillan,* **$4.00**
5	5	9	**Wake Up or Blow Up.** *Frank C. Laubach. Revell,* **$2.00**
2	2	10	**Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power.** *Paul Blanchard. Beacon Press,* **$3.50**

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

LITTLE IS KNOWN of the subject matter of Mr. Churchill's conversations with President Truman, or what policies they mutually agreed upon. It seems obvious that Mr. Churchill would not have come over with an entourage of some 30 advisers without some broad and far-reaching policies in his mind for discussion and agreement. Some hints of the agenda which the prime minister brought with him may be found in his speech to Congress. There, he declared that, in case the prospective truce in Korea should be broken by the Communists, we could count on a "prompt, resolute and effective" response from Great Britain. As if in return for this assurance, Mr. Churchill asked the United States to send "token forces" to support Britain in Egypt. The assuring statement received sharp criticism in Parliament and the British press. The request added fuel to the flames of bitter feeling in Arab countries toward the United States. Mr. Churchill's request was ill-advised. American policy in the Middle East needs radical reorientation toward friendship with Egypt and all Arab countries that are our natural allies against communism.

Aftermath of the Truman-Churchill Conversations

The Book of the Month

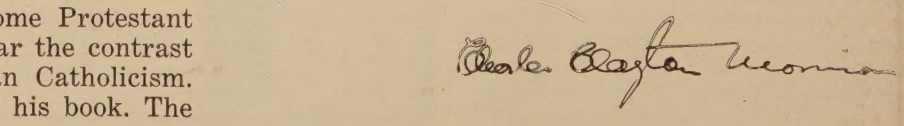
A PROTESTANT MANIFESTO, *by Winfred Ernest Garrison. Abingdon-Cokesbury, $2.75.*

THIS BOOK tells you someting about everything one wants to know about Protestantism. Its information is telescoped, of course, as it must be in the compass of 200 pages. But it is all there, and in such proportions as one would expect from a seasoned historian and theologian who is also an artist in the use of language. The outline of the book must have been inspired. A compact chapter on the historical origin of Protestantism is followed by three main divisions: (1) What Protestants share with all other religions. (2) What Protestants share with all other Christians. (3) What is distinctively Protestant. The latter half of the book is devoted to certain "values and ways" which Protestants cherish; to certain ideas and practices which are "alien to the Protestant spirit"; to some things that "Protestantism denies"; and finally a chapter on "Protestantism's word to the modern world." If you can can think of anything that does not fit into this outline you are one ahead of me. Dr. Garrison has no squeamishness, such as some Protestant writers display, about keeping clear the contrast between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. This is one of the great values of his book. The challenging word "manifesto" in the title is fully justified by the scholarly authority with which the book is written. It has been selected as the Book of the Month by the Religious Book Club, and I predict that it will stand for a long time as the monumental work on our Protestant faith.

A Thought for the Month

AS the political pot boils in view of an approaching national election, there is ground for apprehension lest, in the final brew, the supreme right of the nation will be sacrificed to the low designs of partisanship. Our democracy has, so far, been implemented by a two-party system. We have thus been able to avoid the indecisiveness arising from multiple parties which prevent certain other democracies from gaining clear-cut expressions of the popular will. Our two-party system, while far from ideal, is the best device yet conceived for securing a conclusive vote of the people. Majority rule has been understood as the corollary of the principle of "consent of the governed." It is a fundamental right of a democratic nation to be able to confront and choose between opposing policies formulated with the least possible ambiguity. Each of our two political parties is under obligation to the nation to provide such a choice. The policies of one party are well known. The policies of the other party are in process of determination. But a corrupting consideration has entered its counsels. It is propagandizing the idea that a candidate representing the great uprising of popular opposition to the party in power, cannot win the election. And it is proposed that the issues be washed out with a platform differing only marginally from that of the other party, and a candidate who, it is argued, can achieve victory by his glamor. The effect would be virtually to disfranchise the whole popular opposition to the policies of the present administration. If a third party is found necessary to give a voice to this opposition, it will spell political frustration and open the way to a one-party system which would mean dictatorship. Nothing would more surely subvert the democratic process. Our country is approaching a fateful election. Its destiny in terms of both its democracy and its solvency may hang upon the outcome. Theoretically, our nation is the determiner of its own destiny. But it cannot act unless its parties patriotically provide the opportunity to make an honest and decisive choice.

The Nation's Right



For the Record—

OVER the past year we have often emphasized the fact that the editors of The Pulpit consider themselves proxies for the real editors of this journal, the Protestant and Orthodox preachers of the English-speaking world. Many of our readers have proved that they accept the responsibility which goes along with being members of The Pulpit's board of sponsors. This has been particularly evidenced by the large number of manuscripts and suggestions which have come from all parts of the United States and Canada. Some have gone further and have accepted the responsibility of getting friends to become subscribers. This latter type of assistance has enabled the new Pulpit to gain almost enough new subscribers to make up the difference in the added cost of production occasioned by the use of better paper, larger type and eight added pages of features.

As all our readers should know, the Christian Century Foundation is a nonprofit service organization; every dollar received for subscriptions to The Pulpit is put back into the magazine. Hence the more subscribers—and the more dollars the new subscribers bring—the better magazine we are able to produce. From our standpoint, therefore, each reader who gains a new reader is helping us produce a better journal. But he is also making it possible for himself and his fellow subscribers to have additional and better source materials. Beyond any selfish interest, either for himself or the Christian Century Foundation, the Pulpit reader who interests another minister in becoming a subscriber is, we feel, performing a real service for that friend and his parishioners.

No minister can help but be profited by reading the selected sermons of master craftsmen which appear month after month in these pages. Besides learning something of the style and technique employed by other pastors he gets, either directly or indirectly, fresh ideas to use in his own sermon preparation. From Pulpit Paragraphs come timely illustrations to assist him in imparting these ideas to his people. Our columnists—Enslin, Emurian and Seidenspinner—challenge him once a month to think critically about some phase of his work as a preacher and leader of worship.

When, therefore, a Pulpit subscriber becomes missionary about his interest in The Pulpit and tells a brother pastor what he is missing in terms glowing enough to make him want to subscribe, he is opening new doors of opportunity and understanding for his colleague in the service of the church. We hope that this year each Pulpit subscriber will set for himself a goal of introducing one new subscriber into the fellowship of our Pulpit family.

G.E.H.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE EDITOR'S PAGE 30

SERMONS

The Problem of My Guilt, by Hillyer H. Straton 5
The Cross—Conscience for the World, by Robert F. Weiskotten 8
Religion and the Needs of Men, by Albert E. Barnett 11
Four Roads to a Vital Faith, by Whitney M. Trousdale 14
Gossip: Minor Sin or Major Vice? by Robert I. Kahn 16

ARTICLES

Can a Preacher also Be Saved? by Karl H. A. Rest 2
The Christ Who Lives Today! selected poems from 'Christ in Poetry' edited by Thomas Curtis Clark and Hazel Davis Clark 20

FEATURES

Enslin 22
Emurian 26
Seidenspinner 28
Books 29
Children's Sermon 18
Pulpit Calendar 24
Pulpit Paragraphs 24
Pulpit Post 18
Pulpit Prayers 13
Titles and Texts 10
For The Record 31

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